

**NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND:  
CAN GROWTH MODELS ENSURE  
IMPROVED EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS?**

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**HEARING**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
AND THE WORKFORCE  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

July 27, 2006

**Serial No. 109-50**

Printed for the use of the Committee on Education and the Workforce



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/house>  
or  
Committee address: <http://edworkforce.house.gov>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

28-839 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2006

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IMPROVED EDUCATION FOR ALL STUDENTS?**

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**Thursday, July 27, 2006  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Education and the Workforce  
Washington, DC**

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The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:03 a.m., in room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Howard McKeon [chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives McKeon, Castle, Biggert, Platts, Keller, Wilson, Kline, Inglis, Miller, Kildee, Owens, Scott, Woolsey, Hinojosa, Tierney, Kind, Kucinich, Wu, Holt, Davis of California, McCollum, Van Hollen, and Bishop.

Staff present: Amanda Farris, Professional Staff Member; Steve Forde, Communications Director; Jessica Gross, Press Assistant; Richard Hoar, Professional Staff Member; Lindsey Mask, Press Secretary; Chad Miller, Coalitions Director for Education Policy; Deborah L. Emerson Samantar, Committee Clerk/Intern Coordinator; Alice Cain, Legislative Associate/Education; Denise Forte, Legislative Associate/Education; Lauren Gibbs, Legislative Associate/Education; David Hartzler, Junior Technology Assistant; Lloyd Horwich, Legislative Associate/Education; Thomas Kiley, Communications Director; Ricardo Martinez, Legislative Associate/Education; Joe Novotny, Legislative Assistant/Education; and Mark Zuckerman, Staff Director/General Counsel.

Chairman McKEON [presiding]. A quorum being present, the Committee on Education and the Workforce will come to order.

We are holding this hearing today to hear testimony on “No Child Left Behind: Can Growth Models Ensure Improved Education for All Students?”

With that, I ask unanimous consent for the hearing record to remain open 14 days to allow members’ settlements and other extraneous material referenced during the hearing to be submitted in the official hearing record. Without objection, so ordered.

Good morning. Today marks the latest in our series of hearings on the No Child Left Behind Act, as we work to lay the foundation for next year’s reauthorization of this landmark law.

As always, I would like to take a moment to thank my colleagues for taking part in this important hearing. I would like to extend a special note of gratitude to our committee’s senior Democrat, Mr. Miller, and the Education Reform Subcommittee’s chairman, Mr.

Castle, and ranking member, Ms. Woolsey, for providing leadership throughout the worthwhile series of hearings.

We have only just begun exploring the various aspects of No Child Left Behind, yet I think we can all say that we have learned a great deal already. Each hearing has been constructive and informative, and I believe they will prove to be invaluable as we forge ahead into next year's reauthorization.

Today's hearing will evaluate the implications of using growth models to determine if schools are making adequate yearly progress under No Child Left Behind.

Additionally, we will be discussing a new Government Accountability Office report on the benefits and challenges of using growth models for accountability purposes under NCLB.

The reliability and utility of growth models is the focus of an ongoing debate, and for this committee to gather input on the subject is both reasonable and responsible as part of our ongoing series. We are not necessarily here to embrace the concept nor to refute it. Instead, we are simply here to listen and to learn.

Under current No Child Left Behind guidelines, school districts use a status model to compare the performance of students in a specific grade against the performance of the students of that same grade in the previous year. This is done to determine if schools and districts are meeting adequate yearly progress.

Some have raised concerns about the reliability of the status model and have suggested that a growth model would be more useful. To be clear, growth models differ from status models by comparing the achievement of the same students over time.

Today, we will be hearing from witnesses on their views of growth models, whether they are effective monitors of school performance and progress, and whether or not growth models meet or can be tailored to meet the objectives of No Child Left Behind.

We will have an opportunity to hear from expert witnesses on whether growth models determine more than just improvement, and if they can be tailored to determine if all students are, in fact, reaching proficiency.

Additionally, we will be considering whether or not growth models can ensure that achievement gaps between groups of students are closing. After all, that is the fundamental principle of the No Child Left Behind Act.

I believe today's hearing will be very insightful and will help us better understand the benefits and challenges of using growth models for NCLB accountability purposes. I am looking forward to this hearing and the additional hearings we will be having in this series.

And I now yield to my friend, Mr. Miller, for his opening statement.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McKeon follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Hon. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, Chairman,  
Committee on Education and the Workforce**

Good morning. Today marks the latest in our series of hearings on the No Child Left Behind Act, as we work to lay the foundation for next year's reauthorization of this landmark law. As always, I'd like to take a moment to thank my colleagues for taking part in this important hearing.

I'd also like to extend a special note of gratitude to our Committee's senior Democrat, Mr. Miller, and the Education Reform Subcommittee's Chairman, Mr. Castle, and ranking Member, Ms. Woolsey, for providing leadership throughout this worthwhile series of hearings.

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I believe today's hearing will be very insightful and will help us better understand the benefits and challenges of using growth models for NCLB accountability purposes. I am looking forward to this hearing and the additional hearings we'll be having in this series. And I would now like to yield to my friend, Mr. Miller, for his opening statement.

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Mr. MILLER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you so much for not only scheduling this hearing on, I think, one of the most important subjects we will be considering during reauthorization, but also for the series of hearings that you have scheduled to help the committee better understand the challenge we confront with the reauthorization and important consideration of various subject matters that we will have to take into account.

I believe that today's hearing focuses on one of the most important decisions we will face in reviewing the No Child Left Behind law, whether or not to reform the law's current accountability system.

I can think of no question more central to the reauthorization goals of the law. As one of the original authors of No Child Left Behind, I am often asked how would I like to see the law changed.

The short answer is that I would like to see us be responsive to the legitimate concerns while maintaining the core values of the law—that is, providing an equal educational opportunity for all children and an excellent education to every single child.

There are some well-founded concerns with the current accountability system. One widespread concern relates to schools that are not making adequate yearly progress under the law, even though their students are making impressive academic progress.

For example, take a 5th-grader who reads at the 1st-grade level. Their school could make great strides in helping the student read and, over the course of a year, improve enough to read at 3rd-grade level, but the school would miss making adequate yearly progress under the law if the student and others were not reading at grade level.

The second major concern is that the different students are measured each year, so the achievement of this year's 5th-graders is measured against the achievement of last year's 5th-graders. As a result, a gain or loss of a percentage of students who are proficient could be the result of factors beside the school.

We need to carefully weigh and address these and other concerns. It is important that any accountability system identify schools that need extra help in the most fair and accurate way possible, so that they can qualify for the additional resources, so that children can qualify for the additional academic opportunities such as tutoring or transferring to another public school.

It is absolutely necessary that Congress appropriate the funds promised to make these services available to the children who need them.

Here is the question we must start answering today: Are growth models a feasible alternative to the current accountability system? I have an open mind on growth models. I came to this idea reluctantly, but I think we have three basic questions that we have to deal with.

First, do states have the data capacity and the expertise they need to ensure the information gathered to determine whether a school has made adequate progress is both valid and reliable?

Second, do growth models appropriately credit improving schools, or do they overstate academic progress? In other words, are they a step forward in offering a fairer, more reliable means of accountability, or are they a step backwards, simply another loophole that hinders accountability?

Third, and most importantly from my point of view, are growth models consistent with No Child's Left Behind ultimate goal of assuring that all children can read and do math and science at grade level by 2014? It is imperative that the growth be pegged to proficiency.

No Child Left Behind's goal of an excellent education for all children and equality of educational opportunity for all children are goals that our nation has been pursuing for at least 40 years, ever since the signing of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1966.

We have yet to achieve them. Poor and minority children are still often assigned to less challenging classes with less qualified teachers. As a result, fewer than half of the minority children can read at grade level according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

And black and Latino 17-year-old students, on the average, taught math at the same level as white 13-year-old students. This is unacceptable.

For these children, a good education is often their best and only hope for a prosperous future. That is why we must stay true to No Child Left Behind's promise to provide opportunity and an excel-



lent education to every child, even as we make the necessary adjustments to the law.

I want to thank our panelists for being here today.

I think you have assembled a wonderful panel, Mr. Chairman. And I would like to extend a special thanks to Marlene Shaul from the GAO, who I understand is now retiring.

One lousy report on NCLB and you are retiring, right? My gosh, it is that difficult? Maybe we will all think about joining you. But thank you so much for all your work in the GAO office.

And with that, I look forward to the hearing.

And again, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for starting this process this year before we get into reauthorization next year.

**Prepared Statement of Hon. George Miller, Ranking Minority Member,  
Committee on Education and the Workforce**

Good morning. I want to thank Chairman McKeon for scheduling today's hearing on one of the most important decisions we face in reviewing the No Child Left Behind law: whether or not to reform the law's current accountability system. I can think of no question more central to the reauthorization and goals of the law.

As one of the original authors of No Child Left Behind, I am often asked how I would like to see the law changed. The short answer is that I would like to see us be responsive to legitimate concerns while maintaining the core values of the law—providing equal educational opportunities for all children and an excellent education to every single child.

There are some well-founded concerns with the current accountability system.

One widespread concern relates to schools that are not making adequate yearly progress under the law even though their students are making impressive academic progress.

For example, take a fifth grader who reads at the first grade level. Their school could make great strides in helping the student read and, over the course of a year, improve enough to read at the third grade level. But the school could miss making adequate yearly progress under the law if that student, and others, are still not reading at grade level.

A second major concern is that different students are measured each year, so the achievement of this year's fifth graders is measured against the achievement of last year's fifth graders. As a result, a gain or loss in the percentage of students who are proficient could be a result of factors besides the school.

We need to carefully weigh and address these and other concerns.

It is important that any accountability system identify schools that need extra help in the most fair and accurate way possible, so they can qualify for additional resources, and so their children can qualify for extra academic opportunities, such as tutoring or the transferring to another public school.

It is absolutely necessary that Congress appropriate the funds promised to make these services available to the children who need them.

Here's the question we need to start answering today: are growth models a feasible alternative to the current accountability system?

I have an open mind about growth models, and have three basic questions.

- First, do states have the data capacity and expertise they need to ensure that information gathered to determine whether a school has made adequate progress is both valid and reliable?

- Second, do growth models appropriately credit improving schools, or do they overstate academic progress? In other words, are they a step forward in offering a fairer, more reliable means of accountability? Or are they a step backward—simply another loophole that hinders accountability?

- Third, and most importantly, are growth models consistent with No Child Left Behind's ultimate goal of ensuring that all children can read and do math and science at grade level by 2014? It is imperative that growth be pegged to proficiency.

No Child Left Behind's goals—of an excellent education for all children and equality of educational opportunity for all children—are goals that our nation has been pursuing for at least 40 years, ever since the signing of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1966. But we have yet to achieve them.

Poor and minority children are still often assigned to less-challenging classes and less qualified teachers. As a result, fewer than half of minority children can read at grade level, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

And black and Latino 17-year-old students are, on average, taught math at the same level as white 13-year-old students.

This is unacceptable.

For these children, a good education is often their best and only hope for a prosperous future.

That's why we must stay true to No Child Left Behind's promise to provide opportunity and an excellent education to every child, even as we make the necessary adjustments to the law.

I thank our panelists for being with us today and for the light you will shed on these important questions. I would like to extend a special thank you to Marnie Shaul—who I understand is retiring—for her outstanding work at the Government Accountability Office, including all of her work on the very useful report that we will hear about today.

I also thank Chairman McKeon and his staff for the bipartisan process that led to this hearing. I hope that today's hearing will help us make great progress towards our reauthorization of No Child Left Behind.

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Chairman McKEON. Thank you, Mr. Miller. I hope that wasn't your retirement you were announcing.

Mr. MILLER. Not me, Mr. Chairman. Not as long as you are here. [Laughter.]

Chairman McKEON. We work well together. I would hate to see him leave, most of the time.

We have a distinguished panel here today, and I would like to introduce them now at this time.

First we will hear from Dr. Marlene Shaul, the director of education, workforce and income security for the Government Accountability Office. Dr. Shaul is responsible for the studies GAO undertakes on early childhood programs and elementary and secondary education programs. Before her work in the Federal Government, she worked for the state of Ohio on community and business development issues and at the Kettering Foundation. Dr. Shaul holds a Ph.D. in economics from the Ohio State University.

I would also like to take a moment to recognize Dr. Shaul for all of her work on behalf of GAO. And as Mr. Miller has pointed out, she will be retiring next month, and I want to thank her for all her efforts on what you have done.

Then we will hear from Mr. Joel Klein, the chancellor of the New York City Department of Education. Chancellor Klein oversees more than 1,450 schools with over 1.1 million students. When I served on the school board in California, our district had 10,000 students, and the way they divided this up at the state level was small districts, large districts, and Los Angeles. And Los Angeles is much smaller than New York when it comes to the number of children that you have.

Since becoming chancellor, Mr. Klein has enacted his reform program, Children First, which provides academic support for students who are struggling as well as new supports for parents, in addition to improving school safety. A native of New York, he is active in community service work and has a strong interest in educational issues. He studied at New York University School of Education and later taught math to 6th-graders at a public school in Queens.

Then we will hear from Dr. Reg Weaver, the president of the National Education Association. Dr. Weaver is currently serving his second term as president of the NEA. Prior to his position at the NEA here in Washington, Dr. Weaver served as president of his

local NEA in Harvey, Illinois and as president of the NEA affiliate in Illinois.

A 30-year classroom veteran, Dr. Weaver also serves on a number of boards, including the executive board of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education and the board of directors of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

Then we will hear from Ms. Kati Haycock, who is the director of The Education Trust. Established in 1992, Ed Trust provides a voice for young people, especially those who are poor or members of minority groups. Ed Trust also provides hands-on assistance to educators who want to work together to improve student achievement in pre-Kindergarten through college. Prior to coming to The Education Trust, Ms. Haycock served as executive vice president of the Children's Defense Fund, the nation's largest child advocacy organization.

And finally, we will hear from Dr. William Sanders, research fellow with the University of North Carolina system and a manager of value-added assessment and research for the SAS Institute Inc in Cary, North Carolina. Over the last 20 years, Dr. Sanders and his colleagues have developed and refined a methodology to measure the influence that school systems, schools and teachers have on the academic progress of students.

He has served as an adviser to policymakers at the Federal level and has worked with many states and school districts interested in developing a value-added component to leverage their testing data into more precise and reliable information. Many of his suggestions concerning measurement of student outcomes were incorporated into Tennessee's Educational Improvement Act of 1992.

Thank you all for being here.

I would like to remind you, as you begin your testimony, there is a little light that will come on in front of you. Green means go. Yellow means you have a minute left. And red means wrap it up if you haven't already done so.

And your full written testimony will be included in the record.  
Dr. Shaul?

**STATEMENT OF MARLENE S. SHAUL, DIRECTOR, EDUCATION,  
WORKFORCE AND INCOME SECURITY ISSUES, U.S. GOVERNMENT  
ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE**

Ms. SHAUL. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to present the findings of the report we did for this committee on growth models and how they might be used to meet the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act, such as having all students proficient by 2014.

Our findings are based on GAO's March 2006 survey of the 50 states and the District of Columbia about their use of growth models. We also analyzed academic performance data in several states.

As the committee requested, we have used a broad definition of growth models that includes year-to-year comparisons of schools, cohorts of students and individual students.

My remarks today focus on three topics: How many states are currently using some form of growth models and why; how growth models can measure progress toward achieving key goals of the law; and the challenges states face in using growth models to

measure schools' progress, especially to meet the law's requirements.

Before I go over our findings on each of these, let me give you our bottom line. It is possible for states to use growth models to meet the goals of the law, but they face considerable challenges in doing so.

Now I would like to turn to each of the topics. As you know, states use growth status models to measure AYP and many of them use growth models for their own purposes such as grading schools and rewarding teachers.

As the map shows on the screen, in March of 2006 26 states were using growth models. Those are shown in the dark green. Another 22 states were either considering using growth models or in the process of implementing them. And those are shown in the medium green.

Most states are currently using school level growth models. They compare changes in proficiency levels over time at a particular school. Using a hypothetical example, let's see how this works. It is a three-step process.

In year one, 50 percent of the students assessed were proficient or above. In year two, 60 percent of the students assessed were proficient or above. Growth is measured as that 10 percent difference, and states could use this measure of growth, for example, to compare schools that are similarly situated.

Seven states currently track individual students and can compare growth for a cohort of students—that is the same group of students over time—or for individual students. These models require substantially more data and are more involved than models that measure results at the school level.

In these models, the state may compare actual student achievement to prior student achievement to determine if progress is sufficient.

We examined two state models that measure growth over time and measure progress toward the law's goals. Massachusetts' model sets school targets that are achieved when the number of students at various levels of achievement increases.

The model sets different targets for the school and for each subgroup in the school, and this model has been approved by the Department of Education for use in meeting AYP.

Tennessee's model uses individual student data and projects future academic achievement using information from past performance. It was recently approved by the department for its new growth model pilot program.

Let's take a look at a very simplified example. My apologies to Dr. Sanders here for a very simplified example. In 4th grade, we just have three students on the screen, Students A, B and C, and none of them are shown as meeting the 4th-grade proficiency target.

Next, a projection is made based on past performance, and you can see the projection to 7th grade shows that two of these three students are projected to make the state's 7th-grade AYP target.

So two of these three students can be counted as contributing to meeting the 4th-grade AYP target. Now, you may wonder why two students with similar scores would have different projections. That

is because the projection is based on prior assessments, and those could be quite different.

As you might gather, using growth models can be complicated. To undertake growth models, states must have assessments that are comparable across grades, and at least 2 years of assessment data and the capacity to analyze this greater amount of data.

States need personnel who have technical skills and can explain the results of growth models to teachers and to parents.

Using growth models for AYP purposes may pose a risk for some lower performing schools. Lower performing schools that initially make good growth will need to sustain high levels of growth rates to meet future targets.

If Title I schools do not sustain high growth, they may be disadvantaged by not receiving federally required assistance during the years that the growth target was met.

On the other hand, if fewer schools need federally required assistance, resources could be concentrated in the lowest performing schools.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my remarks. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Shaul follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Marlene S. Shaul, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security Issues, U.S. Government Accountability Office**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: I am pleased to be here today to discuss our report, which describes how states use growth models to measure academic performance and how these models can measure progress toward achieving key goals of the

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLBA). With annual expenditures approaching \$13 billion dollars for Title I alone, NCLBA represents the federal government's single largest investment in the education of the 48 million students who attend public schools. The NCLBA-the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965-requires states to improve academic performance so that all students are proficient by 2014 and achievement gaps among groups such as economically disadvantaged students close. The upcoming reauthorization of the law presents an opportunity to discuss some key issues associated with the act.

To measure whether schools are making adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward having all students proficient by 2014, states set annual proficiency targets using an approach known as a status model, which calculates test scores 1 year at a time. With status models, states or districts determine whether schools make AYP based on performance for the year while generally not taking into account how much better or worse the school did than during the previous year. Thus, a school that is showing significant improvement in student achievement but has too few students at the proficient level would not likely make AYP.

In addition to determining whether schools meet proficiency targets, some states have interest in also recognizing schools that make progress toward NCLBA goals. Growth models can measure progress in achievement or proficiency over time and vary in complexity, such as calculating annual progress in a school's average test scores from year to year; estimating test score progress while taking into account how factors such as student background may affect such progress; or projecting future scores based on current and prior years' results. While growth models are sometimes defined as tracking the same students over time, because of the committee's interest in the range of models states are using to measure academic improvement, we define a growth model as a model that measures changes in proficiency levels or test scores of a student, group, grade, school, or district for 2 or more years. We included models that track schools and student groups in order to provide a broad assessment of options that may be available to states.

My testimony today will focus on how growth models may provide useful information on academic performance. Specifically, I will discuss (1) how many states are using growth models and for what purposes, (2) how growth models can measure progress toward achieving key NCLBA goals, and (3) what challenges states face in using growth models especially to meet the law's key goals.

My written statement is drawn from our recent report on growth models, which we completed for the committee.<sup>1</sup> For this report, we conducted a survey of all states to determine whether they were using growth models. We conducted telephone interviews with state and local education agency officials in eight states that collectively use a variety of growth models, and conducted site visits to California, Massachusetts, North Carolina and Tennessee. For Massachusetts and Tennessee we analyzed student-level data from selected schools to illustrate how their models measure progress toward key NCLBA goals. We conducted this work in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

#### *Summary*

In summary, nearly all states were using or considering growth models for a variety of purposes in addition to their status models as of March 2006. Twenty-six states were using growth models, and another 22 were either considering or in the process of implementing them. Most states that used growth models did so for schools as a whole and for particular groups of students, and 7 also measured growth for individual students. For example, Massachusetts measured growth for schools and groups of students but does not track individual students' scores, while Tennessee set different expectations for growth for each student based on the student's previous test scores. Seventeen of the states that used growth models had been doing so prior to passage of the NCLBA, while 9 began after the law's passage. States used their growth models for a variety of purposes, such as targeting resources for students that need extra help or awarding teachers bonus money based on their school's relative performance.

Certain growth models are capable of tracking progress toward the goals of universal proficiency by 2014 and closing achievement gaps. For example, Massachusetts uses its model to set targets based on the growth that it expects from schools and their student groups. Schools can make AYP if they reach these targets, even if they fall short of reaching the statewide proficiency targets set with the state's status model. Tennessee designed a model, different from the one used for state purposes described above, that projects students' test scores and whether they will be proficient in the future. In this model, if 79 percent of a school's students are predicted to be proficient in 3 years, the school would reach the state's 79 percent proficiency target for the current school year (2005-2006).

States face challenges in developing and implementing growth models that would allow them to meet NCLBA goals. Technical challenges include creating data and assessment systems to meet the substantial data requirements of growth models and having personnel that can analyze and communicate growth model results. For example, states need to have tests that are comparable from one year to the next to accurately measure progress. Further, some models require sophisticated data systems that have the capacity to track individual student performance across grades and schools. Using growth models can present risks for states if schools are designated as making AYP while still needing assistance to progress. For example, one school in Tennessee that did not make AYP under the status model would make AYP under the state's proposed growth model. This school is located in a high-poverty, inner-city neighborhood and has been receiving federal assistance targeted to improving student performance. If the school continues to make AYP under the growth model, its students would no longer receive federally required services, such as tutoring or the option of transferring to a higher performing school. On the other hand, the school's progress may result in its making AYP in the future under the state's status model. U.S. Department of Education (Education) initiatives may help states address these challenges. For example, Education started a pilot project for states to use growth models that meet the department's specific criteria to determine AYP. Education also provided grants to states to support their efforts to track individual test scores over time.

By proceeding with a pilot project with clear goals and criteria and by requiring states to compare results from their growth model with status model results, Education is poised to gain valuable information on whether or not growth models are overstating progress or whether they appropriately give credit to fast-improving schools. In comments on a draft of our recent report, Education expressed concern that the use of a broader definition of growth models would be confusing. GAO used this definition in order to reflect the variety of approaches states have been taking to measure growth in academic performance.

#### *Background*

The NCLBA<sup>2</sup> requires states to set challenging academic content and achievement standards in reading or language arts and mathematics<sup>3</sup> and determine

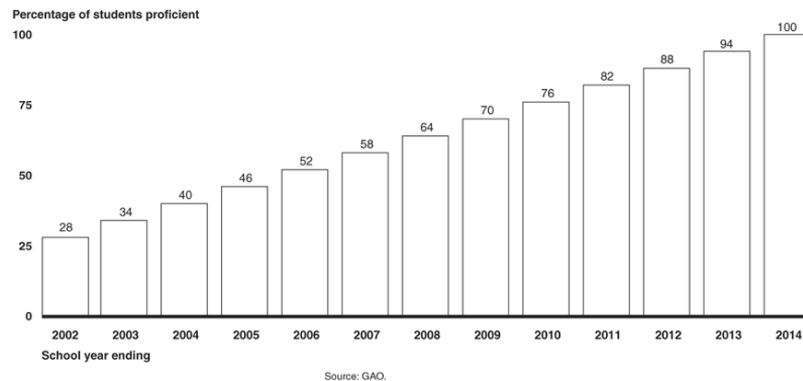
whether school districts and schools make AYP toward meeting these standards.<sup>4</sup> To make AYP, schools generally must:

- show that the percentage of students scoring at the proficient level or higher meets the state proficiency target for the school as a whole and for designated student groups,
- test 95 percent of all students and those in designated groups, and
- meet goals for an additional academic indicator, such as the state's graduation rate.

The purpose of Title I Part A is to improve academic achievement for disadvantaged students. Schools receiving Title I federal funds that do not make AYP for 2 or more years in a row must take action to assist students, such as offering students the opportunity to transfer to other schools or providing additional educational services like tutoring.

States measure AYP using a status model that determines whether or not schools and students in designated groups meet proficiency targets on state tests 1 year at a time. States generally used data from the 2001-2002 school year to set the initial percentage of students that needed to be proficient for a school to make AYP, known as a starting point. From this point, they set annual proficiency targets that increase up to 100 percent by 2014. For example, for schools in a state with a starting point of 28 percent to achieve 100 percent by 2014, the percentage of students who scored at or above proficient on the state test would have to increase by 6 percentage points each year, as shown in figure 1.<sup>5</sup> Schools that do not reach the state target will generally not make AYP.

FIGURE 1: HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE OF ANNUAL PROFICIENCY TARGETS SET UNDER A STATUS MODEL



The law indicates that states are expected to close achievement gaps, but does not specify annual targets to measure progress toward doing so. States, thus, have flexibility in the rate at which they close these gaps. To determine the extent that achievement gaps are closing, states measure the difference in the percentage of students in designated student groups and their peers that reach proficiency. For example, an achievement gap exists if 40 percent of a school's non-economically disadvantaged students were proficient compared with only 16 percent of economically disadvantaged students, a gap of 24 percentage points. To close the gap, the percentage of students in the economically disadvantaged group that reaches proficiency would have to increase at a faster rate than that of their peers.

If a school misses its status model target in a single year, the law includes a "safe harbor" provision that provides a way for schools that are showing significant increases in proficiency rates of student groups to make AYP. Safe harbor measures academic performance in a way that is similar to certain growth models do and allows a school to make AYP by reducing the percentage of students in designated student groups that were not proficient by 10 percent, so long as the groups also show progress on another academic indicator. For example, in a state with a status model target of 40 percent proficient, a school could make AYP under safe harbor if 63 percent of a student group was not proficient compared to 70 percent in the previous year.

*Nearly All States Reported Using or Considering Growth Models to Measure Academic Performance*

Twenty-six states reported using growth models in addition to using their status models to track the performance of schools, designated student groups, or individual students, as reported in our March 2006 survey. Additionally, nearly all states are considering the use of growth models (see fig. 2).

FIGURE 2: STATES THAT REPORTED USING OR CONSIDERING GROWTH MODELS, AS OF MARCH 2006



Source: GAO survey.

Of the 26 states using growth models, 19 states reported measuring changes for schools and student groups, while 7 states reported measuring changes for schools, student groups, and individuals, as shown in table 1.



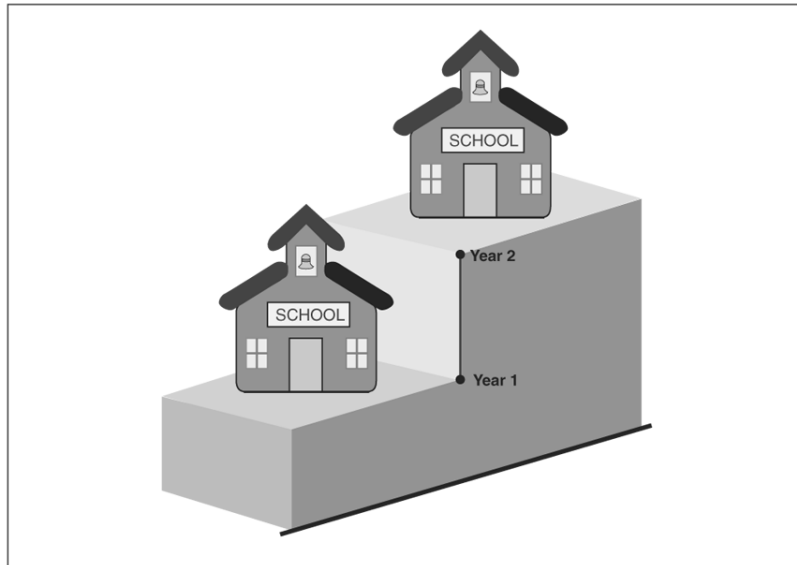
TABLE 1: TYPES OF GROWTH MODELS AND STATES USING THEM, AS OF MARCH 2006

<b>Measures growth of schools and groups</b>	<b>Measures growth of schools, groups, and individual students</b>
Compares the change in scores or proficiency levels of schools or groups of students over time.	Compares the change in scores or proficiency levels of schools, groups of students, and individual students over time.
Data requirements, such as measuring proficiency rates for schools or groups, are similar to those for status models.	Data requirements, such as tracking the proficiency levels or test scores for individual students, are typically more involved than those for status models.
Arizona California Colorado Connecticut Delaware Indiana Kentucky Louisiana Massachusetts Michigan Minnesota Missouri New York Ohio Oklahoma Oregon Pennsylvania Vermont Washington	Florida Mississippi North Carolina South Carolina Tennessee Texas Utah

Source: GAO survey.

For example, Massachusetts used a model that measures growth for the school as a whole and for designated student groups. The state awards points to schools in 25-point increments for each student,<sup>6</sup> depending on how students scored on the state test. Schools earn 100 points for each student who reaches proficiency, but fewer points for students below proficiency. The state averages the points to award a final score to schools. Growth in Massachusetts is calculated by taking the difference in the annual scores that a school earns between 2 years. Figure 3 illustrates the growth a school can make from one year to the next as measured by Massachusetts model.

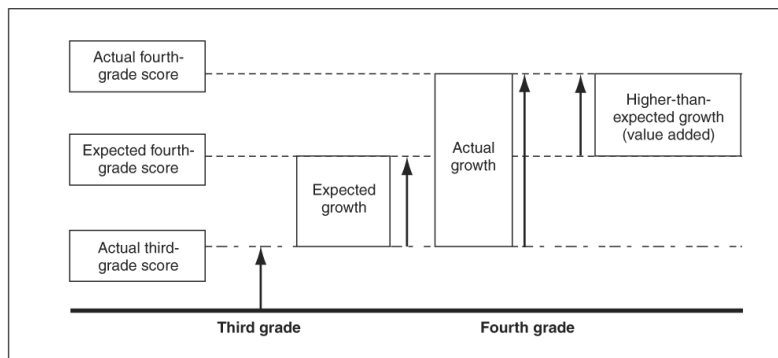
FIGURE 3: ILLUSTRATION OF SCHOOL-LEVEL GROWTH



Sources: GAO and Art Explosion.

Tennessee reported using a growth model that sets different goals for each individual student based on the students' previous test scores. The goal is the score that a student would be expected to receive, and any difference between a student's expected and actual score is considered that student's amount of yearly growth,<sup>7</sup> as shown in figure 4.

FIGURE 4: EXAMPLE OF HIGHER-THAN-EXPECTED GROWTH FOR A FOURTH-GRADE STUDENT UNDER TENNESSEE'S MODEL



Source: GAO illustration based on information provided by the State of Tennessee.

In addition, Tennessee's model, known as the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System, estimates the unique contribution—the value added—that the teacher and school make to each individual student's growth in test scores over time.<sup>8</sup> The state then uses that amount of growth, the unique contribution of the school, and other information to determine whether schools are below, at, or above their level of expected performance. The model also grades schools with an A, B, C, D, or F, which is considered a reflection of the extent to which the school is meeting its requirements for student learning.

Seventeen of the 26 states using growth models reported that their models were in place before the passage of the NCLBA during the 2001-2002 school year, and the remaining 9 states implemented them after the law was passed. States used them for purposes such as rewarding effective teachers and designing intervention plans for struggling schools. For example, North Carolina used its model as a basis to decide whether teachers receive bonus money. Tennessee used its value-added model to provide information about which teachers are most effective with which student groups. In addition to predicting students' expected scores on state tests, Tennessee's model was used to predict scores on college admissions tests, which is helpful for students who want to pursue higher education. In addition, California used its model to identify schools eligible for a voluntary improvement program.

*Certain Growth Models Can Measure Progress toward Key NCLBA Goals*

Certain growth models can measure progress in achieving key NCLBA goals of reaching universal proficiency by 2014 and closing achievement gaps. While states developed growth models for purposes other than NCLBA, states such as Massachusetts and Tennessee have adjusted their state models to use them to meet NCLBA goals. The Massachusetts model has been used to make AYP determinations as part of the state's accountability plan in place since 2003. Tennessee submitted a new model to Education for the growth models pilot that differs from the value-added model described earlier. This new model gives schools credit for students projected to reach proficiency within 3 years in order to meet key NCLBA goals. Our analysis of how models in Massachusetts and Tennessee can measure progress toward the law's two key goals is shown in table 2.

TABLE 2: HOW A STATUS MODEL AND CERTAIN GROWTH MODELS MEASURE PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING KEY NCLBA GOALS\*

	Status model	Growth models	
		Massachusetts (school-level and group-level)	Tennessee <sup>a</sup> (student-level)
Universal proficiency by 2014	Sets same annual proficiency target for all schools in the state	Sets biennial growth targets for each school/group in the state	Sets same annual proficiency target for all schools in the state
	State proficiency targets increase incrementally to 100% by 2014	School/group growth targets increase incrementally to 100% proficiency by 2014; increments may be different by school/group	State proficiency targets increase incrementally to 100% by 2014 Projects future test scores to determine if students may be proficient
	School makes AYP if it reaches the state proficiency target	School makes AYP if it reaches the state proficiency target or its own growth model targets	School makes AYP if it reaches the state proficiency target based on students projected to be proficient in the future
Closing achievement gaps	State proficiency target applies to each student group in all schools	Each student group in a school has its own growth target	State proficiency target applies to each student group in all schools
	School makes AYP if each student group reaches the state proficiency target	School makes AYP if each student group reaches the state proficiency target or its own growth model target	School makes AYP if each student group reaches the state proficiency target based on students projected to be proficient in the future

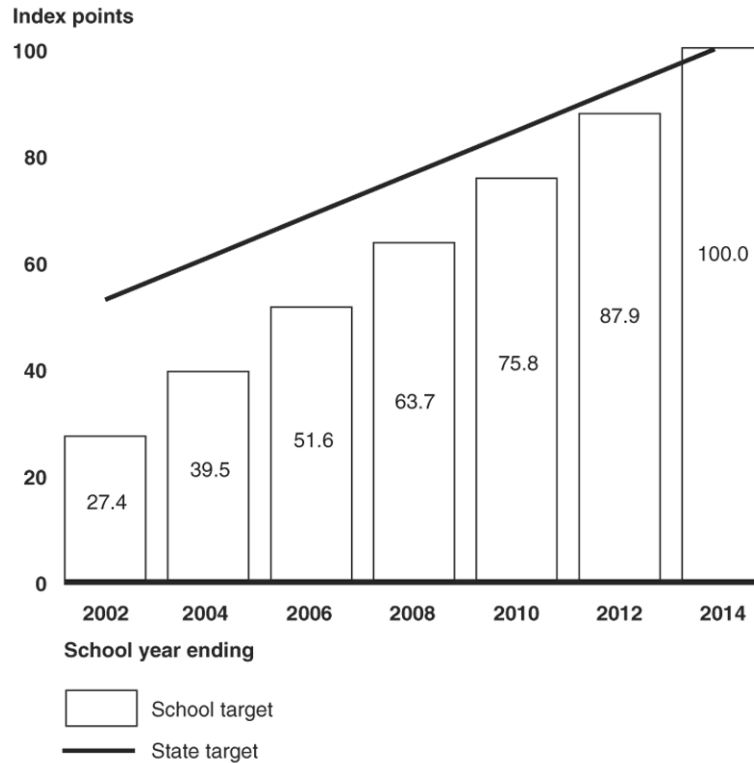
Source: GAO analysis of NCLBA and of information provided by the states of Massachusetts and Tennessee.

\*Note: Additional requirements for schools to make AYP are described in the background section of our report. Massachusetts refers to proficiency targets as performance targets and refers to growth targets as improvement targets.

<sup>a</sup>The information presented in this table reflects the model Tennessee proposed to use as part of Education's growth model pilot project, as opposed to the value-added model it uses for state purposes. The information is based on the March 2006 revision of the proposal the state initially made in February 2006.

Massachusetts designed a model that can measure progress toward the key goals of NCLBA by setting targets for the improvement of schools and their student groups that increase over time until all students are proficient in 2014. Schools can get credit for improving student proficiency even if, in the short term, the requisite number of students has yet to reach the state's status model proficiency targets. For example, figure 5 illustrates a school that is on track to make AYP annually through 2014 by reaching its growth targets. While these growth targets increase at a faster pace than the state's annual proficiency target until 2014, they do provide the school with an additional measure by which it can make AYP.

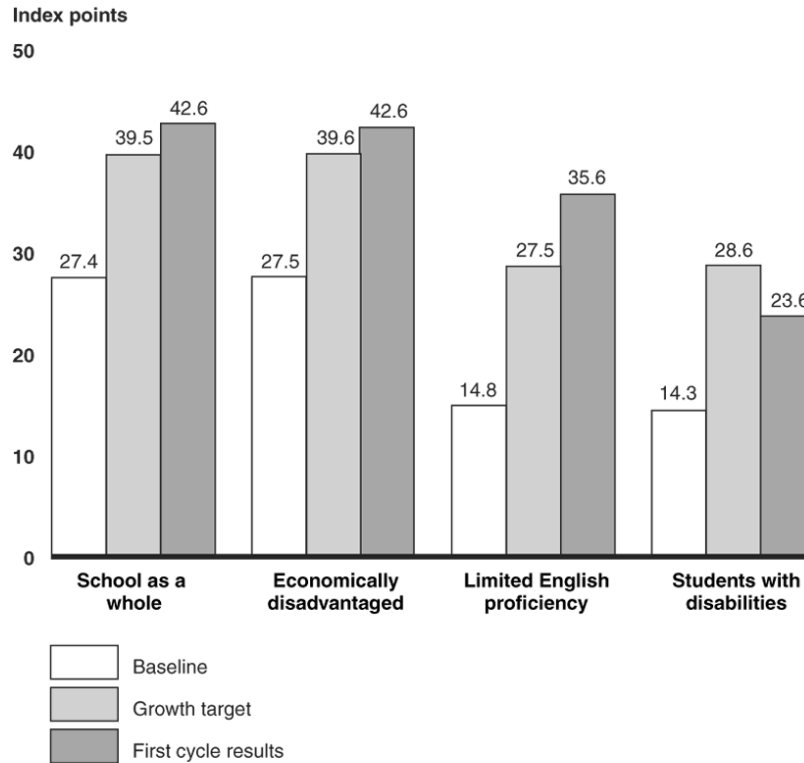
FIGURE 5: TARGETS FOR A SELECTED SCHOOL IN MASSACHUSETTS COMPARED TO STATE STATUS MODEL TARGETS



Source: GAO analysis of data provided by Massachusetts Department of Education; *Commonwealth of Massachusetts Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook*, June 29, 2005.

The model also measures whether achievement gaps are closing by setting targets for designated student groups, similar to how it sets targets for schools as a whole. Schools that increase proficiency too slowly—that is, do not meet status or growth targets—will not make AYP. For example, one selected school in Massachusetts showed significant gains for several designated student groups that were measured against their own targets. However, the school did not make AYP because gains for one student group were not sufficient. This group—students with disabilities—fell short of its growth target, as shown in figure 6.

FIGURE 6: RESULTS FOR A SELECTED SCHOOL IN MASSACHUSETTS IN MATHEMATICS



Source: GAO analysis of data provided by the Massachusetts Department of Education.

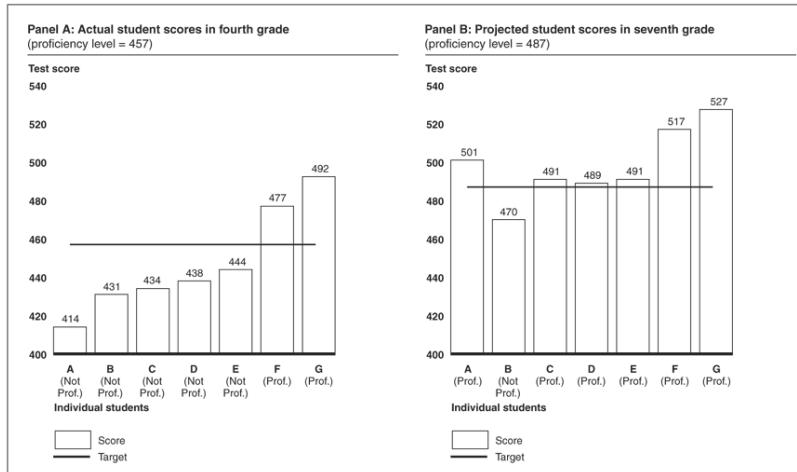
Tennessee developed a different model that can also measure progress toward the NCLBA goals of universal proficiency and closing achievement gaps. Tennessee created a new version of the model it had been using for state purposes to better align with NCLBA.<sup>9</sup> Referred to as a projection model, this approach projects individual student's test scores into the future to determine when they may reach the state's status model proficiency targets.

In order to make AYP under this proposal, a school could reach the state's status model targets by counting as proficient in the current year those students who are predicted to be proficient in the future. The state projects scores for elementary and middle school students 3 years into the future to determine if they are on track to reach proficiency, as follows:

- fourth-grade students projected to reach proficiency by seventh grade,
- fifth-grade students projected to reach proficiency by eighth grade, and
- sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students projected to reach proficiency on the state's high school proficiency test.

These projections are based on prior test data and assume that the student will attend middle or high schools with average performance (an assumption known as average schooling experience).<sup>10</sup> At our request, Tennessee provided analyses for students in several schools that would make AYP under the proposed model. To demonstrate how the model works, we selected students from a school and compared their actual results in fourth grade (panel A) with their projected results for seventh grade (panel B) (see fig. 7).

FIGURE 7: RESULTS FOR SELECTED STUDENTS IN MATHEMATICS FROM A SCHOOL IN TENNESSEE\*



Source: Tennessee Department of Education.

\*Note: The same students are presented in both panels (for example, student A in panel A is the same student as student A in panel B). While these data reflect the scores of individual students, Tennessee provided data to GAO in such a way that student privacy and confidentiality were ensured. Data are illustrative and are not meant to be a statistical representation of the distribution of students in this school.

Tennessee's proposed model can also measure achievement gaps. Under NCLBA, a school makes AYP if all student groups meet the state proficiency target. In Tennessee's model, whether the achievement gap is potentially closed would be determined through projections of students' performance in meeting the state proficiency target.

#### States Face Challenges in Implementing Growth Models

States generally face challenges in collecting and analyzing the data required to implement growth models including models that would meet the law's goals. In addition, using growth models can present risks for states if schools are designated as making AYP while still needing assistance to progress. Education has initiatives that may help states address these challenges.

States must have certain additional data system requirements to implement growth models, including models that would meet NCLBA requirements.

First, a state's ability to collect comparable data over at least 2 years is a minimum requirement for any growth model. States must ensure that test results are comparable from one year to the next and possibly from one grade to the next, both of which are especially challenging when test questions and formats change. Second, the capacity to collect data across time and schools is also required to implement growth models that use student-level data. This capacity often requires a statewide system to assign unique numbers to identify individual students. Developing and implementing these systems is a complicated process that includes assigning numbers, setting up the system in all schools and districts, and correctly matching individual student data over time, among other steps. Third, states need to ensure that data are free from errors in their calculations of performance. While ensuring data accuracy is important for status models, doing so is particularly important for growth models, because errors in multiple years can accumulate, leading to unreliable results.

States also need greater research and analysis expertise to use growth models as well as support for people who need to manage and communicate the model's results. For example, Tennessee officials told us that they have contracted with a software company for several years because of the complexity of the model and its underlying data system. Florida has a contract with a local university to assist it with assessing data accuracy, including unique student identifiers required for its model. In addition, states will incur training costs as they inform teachers, administrators, media, legislators, and the general public about the additional complexities that occur when using growth models. For example, administrators in one district in

North Carolina told us that their district lacks enough specialists who can explain the state's growth model to all principals and teachers in need of guidance and additional training.

Using growth models can present risks for states if schools are designated as making AYP while still needing assistance to progress. On the basis of growth model results, some schools would make AYP even though these schools may have relatively low-achieving students. As a result, some students in Title I schools may be disadvantaged by not receiving federally-required services.

In two Massachusetts districts that we analyzed, 23 of the 59 schools that made AYP did so based on the state's growth model, even though they did not reach the state's status model proficiency rate targets in 2003-2004.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, these schools may not be eligible to receive services required under NCLBA for schools in need of improvement, such as tutoring and school choice. Because these schools would need to sustain high growth rates in order to achieve universal proficiency by 2014, it is likely that their students would benefit from additional support.

In Tennessee, 47 of the 353 schools that had not made AYP in the 2004-2005 school year would do so under the state's proposed projection model. One school that would be allowed to make AYP under the proposed model was located in a high-poverty, inner-city neighborhood. That school receives Title I funding, as two-thirds of its students are classified as economically disadvantaged. The school was already receiving services required under NCLBA to help its students. If the school continues to make AYP under the growth model, these services may no longer be provided.

Education's initiatives, such as the growth model pilot project, may facilitate growth model implementation. In November 2005, Education announced a pilot project for states to submit proposals for using a growth model-one that meets criteria established by the department-along with their status model, to determine AYP. While NCLBA does not specify the use of growth models for making AYP determinations, the department started the pilot to evaluate how growth models might help schools meet NCLBA proficiency goals and close achievement gaps.

For the growth model pilot project, each state had to demonstrate how its growth model proposal met Education's criteria, many of which are consistent with the legal requirements of status models. In addition to those requirements, Education included criteria that the proposed models track student progress over time and have an assessment system with tests that are comparable over time. Of the 20 proposals, Education approved 2 states-North Carolina and Tennessee-to use growth models to make AYP determinations in the 2005-2006 school year. States may submit proposals for the pilot again this fall.

In addition to meeting all of the criteria, Education and peer reviewers noted that Tennessee and North Carolina had many years of experience with data systems that support growth models. These states must report to Education the number of schools that made AYP on the basis of their status and growth models. Education expects to share the results with other states, Congress, and the public after it assesses the effects of the pilot.

In addition to the growth model pilot project, Education awarded nearly \$53 million in grants to 14 states for the design and implementation of statewide longitudinal data systems-systems that are essential for the development of student-level growth models. While independent of the pilot project, states with a longitudinal data system-one that gathers data such as test scores on the same student from year to year-will be better positioned to implement a growth model than they would have been without it. Education intended the grants to help states generate and use accurate and timely data to meet reporting requirements, support decision making, and aid education research, among other purposes. Education plans to disseminate lessons learned and solutions developed by states that received grants.

### *Conclusion*

While status models provide a snapshot of academic performance, growth models can provide states with more detailed information on how schools' and students' performance has changed from year to year. Growth models can recognize schools whose students are making significant gains on state tests but are still not proficient. Educators can use information about the academic growth of individual students to tailor interventions to the needs of particular students or groups. In this respect, models that measure individual students' growth provide the most in-depth and useful information, yet the majority of the models currently in use are not designed to do this.

Through its approval of Massachusetts' model and the growth model pilot program, Education is proceeding prudently in its effort to allow states to use growth models to meet NCLBA requirements. Education is allowing only states with the

most advanced models that can measure progress toward NCLBA goals to use the models to determine AYP. Under the pilot project, which has clear goals and criteria that requires states to compare results from their growth model with status model results, Education is poised to gain valuable information on whether or not growth models are overstating progress or whether they appropriately give credit to fast-improving schools.

While growth models may be defined as tracking the same students over time, GAO used a definition that also includes tracking the performance of schools and groups of students. In comments on our report, Education expressed concern that this definition may confuse readers because it is very broad and includes models that compare changes in scores or proficiency levels of schools or groups of students. GAO used this definition of growth to reflect the variety of approaches states are taking to measure academic progress.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared statement. I would be happy to respond to any questions that you or members of the committee may have.

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> GAO, No Child Left Behind Act: States Face Challenges Measuring Academic Growth That Education's Initiatives May Help Address, GAO-06-661 (Washington, D.C.: July 17, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Pub. L. No. 107-110 (Jan. 8, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> The law also requires content standards to be developed for science beginning in the 2005-2006 school year and science tests to be implemented in the 2007-2008 school year.

<sup>4</sup> States determine whether schools and school districts make AYP or not. For this report, we will discuss AYP determinations in the context of schools.

<sup>5</sup> States were able to map out different paths to universal proficiency subject to certain limitations. For example, states must increase the targets at least once every 3 years and those increases must lead to 100 percent proficiency by 2014. See GAO, No Child Left Behind Act: Improvements Needed in Education's Process for Tracking States' Implementation of Key Provisions, GAO-04-734, (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 30, 2004).

<sup>6</sup> Students with disabilities are generally included in these calculations. The state is allowed to give different tests to students with significant cognitive impairments and to count them differently for calculating points awarded to schools.

<sup>7</sup> Tennessee's growth model mentioned here is not used to make AYP determinations under NCLBA. However, Tennessee developed a different growth model to determine AYP for Education's growth model pilot project. That model is discussed later in this testimony.

<sup>8</sup> The state calculates the unique contribution of schools and teachers by using a multivariate, longitudinal statistical method where results are estimated using data specific for students within each classroom or school.

<sup>9</sup> Tennessee continues to use its original model to rate schools based in part on the unique contributions or the value added of school to student achievement.

<sup>10</sup> While Tennessee's model estimates future performance, other models are able to measure growth without these projections. For example, Florida uses a model that calculates results for individual students by comparing performance in the current year with performance in prior years.

<sup>11</sup> Another 11 schools also met the growth target, but these 11 schools made AYP under NCLBA's safe harbor provision.

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Chairman McKEON. Thank you very much.  
Chancellor Klein?

#### STATEMENT OF JOEL I. KLEIN, CHANCELLOR, NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mr. KLEIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Miller, members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to be before you today.

I want to acknowledge my friend, Major Owens, who has served this country with distinction for the past 24 years, who will be leaving this Congress at the end of the term. And it is a loss to our city, and you will be missed, sir. I just want you to know that.

You have my testimony, so let me highlight a few of the points that I think are critical, because I agree with the committee. I think this is a key issue on No Child Left Behind.

Mr. Miller, I think you are right. I think we have many problems in K-12 education, none greater than the achievement gap between black and Latino kids on the one hand and white and Asian kids



on the other. It is the shame of this nation. I used to think it was merely a moral crisis. Now it is an economic crisis as well.

And I think NCLB, which is an act that needs to be improved, nevertheless put in place an accountability system that forced our nation to come to grips, after decades of reform in public education that had not moved the needle—to come to grips with this fundamental issue of a massive achievement gap.

And to me, whatever else happens, this Congress and this nation should not throw out the baby with the bath water when it comes to the fundamental framework and the accountability that is built in NCLB.

People like you should be very tough on people like me. Excuses for why our kids are not succeeding in public education are not going to help us solve the problem.

That said, my view is an accountability system need not only be tough, it needs to be fundamentally credible. And the current NCLB system I don't think is ultimately long-term credible and sustainable.

We are almost a decade out from 2014 so its impact is not fully clear yet, but let me tell you what I think the behaviors it is leading to in the trenches where people like I am working with those 1.1 million kids.

By focusing on proficiency, what we do is we create perverse incentives in terms of those kids that the school system focuses on. The kids who are in my system—level three is proficient. Kids who are close to the line get the most attention, because you are going to get the credit for bumping them over.

You take a kid from level 2.1 to 2.9—that is a huge gain. You don't get any credit for it. You take a kid from 2.9 to three—that is a big credit event.

People out in the field get that, because AYP and city status matters to them. If you take a kid from level three to level four, which is where we want our kids, future leaders of this country—we want our highest performing kids to be moving forward, too.

Level three to level four—you get no credit for it in the system. We group them together. It is a mistake. It is a major mistake. Every kid has got to be moving forward.

The derivative effect of that is we often engage in what I call zip code educational policy, because in my school system we have some communities where kids are coming to school ahead of the game and are performing at level three and four before they got to school. And yet that school is perceived to be a good school whether it is moving those kids forward or not.

We have got other kids—schools where there are high concentrations of English language learners, special ed kids and so forth. Those kids may have a longer road to travel, but they may be moving along that road and still not getting the kind of recognition they deserve.

It is incredibly important to close this gap, but you can't leap across this gap in one fell swoop. And schools that are bringing over those years a sustained growth deserve credit at every end of the spectrum.

I don't want us to leave those level threes at level three in New York, and I want those schools to get credit. That is precisely what

we are doing in our city. We are putting in place—building on NCLB an accountability system that will give real credit for schools that are moving forward on growth.

We are going to do this in a way that looks at exactly the kind of thing that Dr. Shaul said. Year to year, how did this year's 3rd-graders do in the 4th grade, do in the 5th grade, do in the 6th grade?

Now, we are going to take into account where schools start and how they move forward. And we are not going to allow the kind of what I think is perverse responsive behavior of using gimmicks to try to move the number of kids to level three. We are going to look at every single kid in the system.

We are going to give extra credit to those people who are moving the most challenging, the hardest-to-serve kids in the system. But we are going to look at every single kid.

And we are going to provide the data and the information to the schools. An accountability system that is a gotcha game is not going to be sufficient for what we need. The information has got to be used by the schools.

Schools that use assessment take the data and use that to improve their teaching practices and to make sure that we build the solid foundation for kids before they move forward.

So we are creating a massive data bank and investing enormous amounts of resources in professional development, so our principals, assistant principals and teachers can use the data to drive accountability.

At some point, an accountability system has to be a spotlight, not a hammer. We can do that.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Klein follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Chancellor Joel Klein, New York City Department of Education**

Good morning. Thank you Chairman McKeon and Congressman Miller for inviting me to testify today. I would also like to thank Congressman Owens for his many years of service to New York City. You will be missed.

This morning, I will discuss the promise of growth models from the vantage point of New York City, where we are implementing a hybrid system that tracks both growth and proficiency levels. But first, I'd like to step back and put my comments into context.

For decades, school reformers have tried and failed to fix education in America, to ensure that American students do not fall behind their international peers and to ensure that all students in this country, no matter what their race or socio-economic status, are receiving the high-quality education they deserve. The law that we're discussing today, No Child Left Behind, might not be perfect, but it is incredibly valuable because it recognizes that the achievement gap—the gap that separates our African-American and Latino students from their white and Asian peers—is the chief, though certainly not the only, problem in American schooling. When Congress passed NCLB, it helped America finally take responsibility for the fact that white and Asian students are performing four years ahead of African-American and Latino students in high school. Four years. And this law finally puts muscle behind the attempt to close that gap. It forces us to report student performance in grades three through eight by race. We can no longer mask the deficiencies of some students with outsized gains by others.

Now, NCLB has problems, and I will talk about those today. But at the same time, it is critical that we all remember that NCLB is not just important. It's fundamental. I've never met a law that couldn't be improved. But to criticize the heart of No Child Left Behind is to refuse to take responsibility for the achievement gap—the most serious civil rights, social, and economic crisis facing America today. We should, of course, learn from our experiences and make a good thing better, but we should not consider diluting or destroying a law that forces us to confront our prob-

lems head on. We must not yield to the critics of NCLB because, I believe, their complaints are missing the law's broader significance.

Now, to the topic of the day. For a long time, we have heard that we face a choice between absolute standards, like those in NCLB, and value-added approaches, like the ones we are discussing today. I don't think we have to choose. We need to keep our eye on the ultimate goal, which is ensuring that every child is at least proficient in reading, math, and the other core academic areas; if a school is not helping all children achieve high standards, the school still has work to do. But we also need to recognize that schools sometimes succeed in helping kids make real, substantial progress without boosting them all the way to proficiency. We all know it is wrong to call a school an unqualified success when children are not meeting standards in reading and math, but it is also wrong to call a school an unqualified failure when it is helping its students grow academically. Both absolute achievement and growth should count when we are judging schools.

While it's important to strive for 100% proficiency, focusing on proficiency alone and ignoring gains can lead to serious negative consequences.

First, the current the law, which shortchanges growth, motivates educators to help certain types of students and not others. The way the law is designed, we get credit if we move a child across the threshold of "proficiency." So, if a school wants to succeed under No Child Left Behind, it makes sense to dedicate more time and energy helping students who are just on the cusp of meeting standards than to students who are far away from proficiency or to students who are already safely above the threshold. Gains achieved by students who make progress but fail to reach proficiency are not rewarded. If children are so far behind that they have little prospect of achieving proficiency, it may make more sense under NCLB to encourage them to drop out than to help them achieve at the highest levels possible. Similarly, it's not worth giving the brightest kids—the students who could become the future leaders of this nation—the extra support and attention they need to achieve their potential because boosting children further above proficiency brings no added benefit under the law.

Second, the law can give a misleading picture of how well a school is doing. We have schools in New York filled with kids who score above the proficiency threshold even though the schools are doing very little to help students progress beyond where they started on the first day of school. These schools pass under NCLB. At the other extreme, we have other schools that make real contributions to student learning and consistently help students move in the right direction, but don't get them all the way to proficiency. These schools do not get credit under NCLB.

I know some people worry that growth models will give weak educators an excuse to give weak schools passing grades just because they are showing marginal gains. I say it depends on the growth model. It's true that a growth model could be designed as a smokescreen, but it could also be crafted to accurately gauge student learning. The latter is what we are creating in New York.

Mayor Bloomberg and I have been very tough on accountability. We eliminated social promotion in our elementary and middle schools. We shut down failing high schools. We created "Empowerment Schools," schools whose principals receive greater autonomy in exchange for entering specific performance contracts agreeing to be held accountable for results. More than 300 principals volunteered, knowing that they could lose their jobs if they were unable to raise student achievement.

The sophisticated growth model we are crafting is another way we hold our schools accountable for providing New York City schoolchildren with the education they need and deserve. Our new measure of progress will be more precise than what is required under No Child Left Behind. We will measure all year-to-year gains, even those that don't boost students to proficiency, and all losses. I think this will be a vast improvement that will start placing incentives where they belong: on educating all students. Here's how it will work: According to NCLB Student A's progress from a 2.0 to a 2.9 on New York's four-point scale counts for nothing and Student B's drop from a 2.8 to a 2.2 does not count against his school. Student C's progress by a tenth of a point, however, from a 2.9 to the point of proficiency, a 3.0, matters. If progress is our goal, NCLB's incentives system is out of whack. New York City's new accountability system will provide more appropriate incentives. We want teachers to focus on all students, not just those who are most likely to jump across an arbitrary threshold.

Our new value-added information will feed into annual school progress reports, which will be completely transparent and publicly available for all of our 1,400 schools. These reports will measure schools on three quantitative factors: School Environment, Performance, and Progress. School Environment is a combination of attendance and safety data, as well as student, teacher, and parent survey results. Performance is what NCLB now relies on—snapshots of student performance in a

given year. Progress is our “value added” measurement. It measures aggregated individual student performance over time. Based on these three factors, with Progress counting most, our schools will receive grades of A, B, C, D or F.

These grades will tell parents how well their students’ schools are performing-and whether they are making progress. Grades will also help administrators take responsibility for the schools, ensuring that children don’t remain in failing schools. We will intervene to make improvements, and if we need to, we will shut down failing schools or change school leadership. Under our growth model, we expect that about 15% of schools will receive Ds or Fs.

We need to use data not only to evaluate how schools are performing, but also to enable principals and teachers to identify their strengths and weaknesses, to share the practices that work and improve the ones that don’t. So, starting next year, we will also implement a comprehensive achievement reporting system, which will include all the information from the state standardized exams as well as information from periodic in-class assessments, which are no-stakes diagnostics that teachers will use to check in on their students. Using these systems, teachers will be able to give mini-assessments to learn whether students have grasped what they’ve been taught. If they have, teachers will move to the next subject. If they haven’t-or if certain students are still struggling-teachers can intervene. These assessments will help educators measure progress over the course of the year and make mid-course corrections for students or classes with difficulties. They will no longer have to wait for end-of-year standardized exams to learn if students needed extra help.

Some of our schools are already using data to drive performance, but too many of our educators are estimating and guessing, even though we’re working in an age of technology, an age when educators don’t have to guess what the problem is and experiment until they find the right solution. In its current form, NCLB does not motivate educators to help all children achieve at the highest levels possible. I believe New York City’s new system’s will help to make this possible.

Thank you. I welcome your questions.

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Chairman McKEON. Thank you very much.  
Dr. Weaver?

**STATEMENT OF REG WEAVER, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL  
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**

Mr. WEAVER. Thank you very much. Thank you for the opportunity to join you this morning to share the views of 2.8 million members of the National Education Association.

The NEA is the largest professional association in the country, and our membership is diverse, but we have a common mission and values based on our belief that a great public school is a basic right for every child.

NEA and our members have long supported the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. And despite what some say, we have always supported the laudable goals of No Child Left Behind, closing the achievement gaps, raising overall student achievement and ensuring all students have a qualified teacher.

NEA did not oppose annual testing, nor did we oppose the passage of No Child Left Behind. We did, however, make a clear statement as to our objection to accountability systems based solely upon test scores.

And I hope that this committee understands that expressions of concern about the impact of this law are not a rejection of the goals of No Child Left Behind, nor do we want to do away with the law.

In fact, I just returned from our representative assembly where almost 9,000 delegates voted on NEA’s priorities for elementary and secondary act reauthorization. And they didn’t vote to repeal nor do away with No Child Left Behind.

Instead, they voted on a comprehensive set of proposals designed to fix what is not working with the law and add to it the kind of initiatives that will make our goals a common reality.

And our report spells out seven key components of a great public school: Quality programs and services; high expectations and standards; quality conditions for teaching and lifelong learning; qualified, caring, diverse and stable staff; shared responsibility for appropriate school accountability by stakeholders at all levels; parental, family and community involvement and engagement; and adequate, equitable and sustainable funding.

Growth models—well, we applaud Secretary Spellings' decision to pilot a growth model project, and we thank her for listening to educators and being willing to explore new options.

We believe that accountability systems should reward success and support educators to help students learn. And measuring student growth over time will be more helpful than the current snapshot approach which measures student achievement on 1 day at a time throughout the year.

I taught middle school science. And as a veteran classroom teacher, I would welcome the opportunity to use my students' test results to guide my instructional practice.

But I seriously question the logic of any system that mandates tests but does not also mandate that the results of those tests be given in time to make any adjustments in instruction.

And if someone had told me that my class the next year would be tested in the spring, and their scores would be compared to my students' scores from last year, I would have said that there is something inherently wrong with that system.

An accountability system designed to measure performance cannot compare apples and oranges. And as a science teacher, I know that such a system will not yield any meaningful data.

The implementation phase of No Child Left Behind has highlighted a critical void in assessing student progress, measuring student progress over time, and providing the resources and tools that educators need to get the job done.

In our opinion, it does not recognize that children are human beings and not cardboard cutouts and that teaching them is both an art and a science.

Including growth models in No Child Left Behind's accountability system would not mean abandoning requirements that all students read and complete math problems on grade level. Quite the opposite is true. Growth models hold greater promise to demonstrate whether a student is learning and provides data to educators in order to inform their instruction.

Better data will show when instructional techniques are not working and will allow teachers to make adjustments to meet student needs.

Growth models also reward success in teaching and learning by giving schools credit both for moving a child from below basic to basic, as well as moving a child from proficient to advanced.

I would like to offer one caution, however. Including a growth model as part of adequate yearly progress—it is not a panacea. Complexities will continue to arise for some English language

learners and certain students with disabilities who take alternate assessments.

And we will also continue to need much more research about growth models as well as technical assistance to states and local districts and educators, but the ultimate goal should be to help classroom educators use the data to inform instruction.

And I have made closing the achievement gap one of our organization's highest priorities. And it is not only something that I care deeply about, but I believe it is the right thing to do.

My written testimony highlights the many ways in which the NEA has marshaled our resources to assist our state and local affiliates to help close the achievement gaps. In short, we have devoted millions of dollars and thousands of hours of staff time to that effort.

And I would like to conclude by sharing a story from one of our members. It is a story about a boy named Cesar and his ESL teacher, Mary Beth Solano in Fort Collins, Colorado.

And she writes: "Cesar, a 3rd-grade student, came to me in August with not a word of English. And together with his classroom teacher, significant work from me and a fantastic group of peers, he learned English amazingly well.

"And I was almost going to exempt him from the test, but two things stopped me: One, part of No Child Left Behind that says that any child who doesn't take the test counts as a zero on our school's report card, and Cesar himself, who set as his personal goal knowing enough English to pass Colorado State's mandated No Child Left Behind test.

"And reluctantly but with Cesar's terrific desire to exceed coaxing us on, we had him take the test. And he struggled and he struggled, reading every word, and read it over and over again until he understood and thought he had understood well enough to answer the question.

"And he worked so hard and so long on the test, it brought tears to my eyes. And he was so proud of himself after he completed it. You should have seen his face.

"Well, the scores came out. While we celebrated, his family was devastated. Cesar earned a score that was only two tiny points below the cutoff for partially proficient, but he was labeled an unsatisfactory learner. Nothing could be farther from the truth, for he had gone from basically zero to almost proficient in just 6 months.

"And I tried to explain that to his parents and tried even harder to lift Cesar's spirits. But I am not sure how much success that he had.

"So without changes in the structure and the process of reporting scores, stories like Cesar's will continue to deflate and demoralize the best and the brightest."

So I encourage every one of you, every one of the members of the committee, to talk to your local educators about their experiences and ask them about their frustrations. But more importantly, ask them about their successes.

And they all have a Cesar story, and they all want every one of their students to succeed. And you know what? They go every day above and beyond the call of duty, time and time again, to make that goal a reality for America's children.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Weaver follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Reg Weaver, President, National Education Association**

Good morning Chairman McKeon, Congressman Miller, and Members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to join you this morning and share the views of the 2.8 million members of the National Education Association (NEA).

NEA is the largest professional association in the country, representing public school educators-teachers and education support professionals, higher education faculty, educators teaching in Department of Defense schools, students in colleges of teacher education, and retired educators across the country. While our membership is diverse, we have a common mission and values based on our belief that a great public school is a basic right for every child.

Our members go into education for two reasons-because they love children and they appreciate the importance of education in our society. We want all students to succeed. Our members show up at school every day to nurture children, to bring out their full potential, to be anchors in children's lives, and to help prepare them for the 21st century world that awaits them. It is their passion and dedication that informs and guides NEA's work as we advocate for sound public policy that will help our members achieve their goals.

*I. NEA Principles for Great Public Schools*

Today's hearing focuses primarily on the use of growth models in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability framework. Before I address that specific point, however, I would like to take a moment to make a few broader points about NEA's principles and goals for ensuring great public schools.

NEA and its members have long supported the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). During the last reauthorization of ESEA, we supported the laudable goals of No Child Left Behind-closing achievement gaps, raising overall student achievement, and ensuring all students have a qualified teacher. We also supported a number of specific elements in the new law, including the targeting of Title I funds to the neediest schools and students; disaggregation of test data by subgroup; and programs for dropout prevention, after-school learning opportunities, and math and science education. We continue to support all of these elements.

NEA did not at any time oppose annual testing nor did we oppose passage of the No Child Left Behind Act. We did, however, make clear to Congress our objection to accountability systems based solely upon test scores. We also made clear that any tests used in an accountability system had to be valid and reliable, aligned with the curriculum, and designed to inform instruction, and that the system had to allow for accurate and fair measurement of test results.

During the debate on No Child Left Behind, we suggested two ways to craft a more workable, accurate, and fair accountability system. First, we suggested the use of multiple measures of student achievement and school quality to determine school effectiveness. Second, we suggested creating accountability systems that not only required certain proficiency levels, but that also measured growth in student achievement over time. We supported, and continue to support, these policies because, while we deeply believe that all children can learn, we know that not all children learn at the same rate or in the same way.

Let me be perfectly clear that our criticisms during initial debate and our continuing expressions of concern over implementation of the law are not rejections of the goals of No Child Left Behind. Nor do they reflect a desire to do away with the law.

In fact, I have made closing the achievement gaps one of NEA's highest goals. It is not only something about which I care personally; it is the right thing to do. As someone who taught for 30 years, I know that change doesn't happen overnight. But, I also know that if we are to achieve the change we seek, we cannot ignore the experiences of those working in our classrooms every day. Rather, we must translate the lessons we learn from our nation's educators into sound, workable policies that will help us meet our goals.

I just returned from NEA's annual meeting where almost 9,000 delegates voted on NEA's priorities for ESEA reauthorization. They didn't vote to repeal or do away with NCLB. Instead, they voted on a comprehensive set of proposals designed to fix what's wrong with the law and add to it the kinds of initiatives that will make our common goals a reality. A copy of that report is attached as Appendix I. I hope it will help guide the committee as you approach reauthorization.

Our report spells out what we believe to be the seven key components of a great public school:

- Quality programs and services that meet the full range of all children's needs so that they come to school every day ready and able to learn;

- High expectations and standards with a rigorous and comprehensive curriculum for all students;

- Quality conditions for teaching and lifelong learning;

- A qualified, caring, diverse, and stable workforce;

- Shared responsibility for appropriate school accountability by stakeholders at all levels;

- Parental, family, and community involvement and engagement; and

- Adequate, equitable, and sustainable funding.

The priorities detailed in the report are very consistent with the views of our general membership. In fact, our recent member poll found:

- 57 percent of our members want major changes to No Child Left Behind, 21 percent want minor changes, 17 percent favor repeal, and just 4 percent want to keep the law as it is;

- 95 percent of our members want the Association to be active in working to change the law, while only 4 percent disagree;

- 85 percent of our members believe there is too much reliance on standardized testing.

- Our members rated highest the following proposals to improve NCLB:

- Use multiple measures instead of just tests (71% strongly favor);

- Measure student achievement over time instead of just the day of the test (70% strongly favor);

- Ensure that employee rights under contracts and laws are respected (65% strongly favor);

- Fully fund mandates (64% strongly favor);

- Restore the class size reduction program (63% strongly favor).

## *II. Growth Models and Effective Accountability Systems*

I would now like to turn to the focus of today's hearing, the use of growth models in measuring student progress and school effectiveness. As I have stated, we believe that accountability systems should be based upon multiple measures, including local assessments, teacher-designed classroom assessments collected over time, portfolios and other measures of student learning, graduation/dropout rates, in-grade retention, percentage of students taking honors/advanced classes and Advanced Placement exams, and college enrollment rates. We strongly believe that the current one-size-fits-all system is unacceptable and that states need the flexibility to design systems that produce results, including deciding in which grades to administer annual statewide tests.

Accountability systems should reward success and support educators to help students learn. To this end, any improved accountability system should allow for use of growth models and other measures that assess student learning over time and recognize improvement on all points of the achievement scale. These measures should then be used as a guide to revise instructional practices and curricula, provide individual assistance to students, and tailor appropriate professional development for teachers and other educators. They should not be used to penalize teachers or schools.

We applaud Secretary Spellings' decision to pilot a growth model project. Her decision signaled that she has heard what our members have had to say, and we thank her for that. We also applaud her decision to allow states to propose their own growth models for peer review, rather than prescribing a certain type of model. This flexibility was particularly welcome given that all states were testing prior to enactment of NCLB and 15 states were already testing annually in grades three through eight. We have recently completed a policy brief on the growth model pilot program and the process used by the Department of Education to approve proposals by two states (NC and TN). This policy brief is attached as Appendix II to my statement.

Our members believe that measuring student growth over time will be more helpful than the current snapshot approach, which measures student achievement on one day out of the year. A growth model approach will allow for a more accurate reflection of student learning and will help inform instruction.

I taught middle school science for 30 years. If someone had told me that my students would be given a state standardized test in the spring and that I would not receive the results of those assessments in time to make any instructional adjustments, I would have seriously questioned the logic of the central testing office. If someone had then told me that my class the next year would be tested in the spring



and that their scores would be compared to my students from last year, I would have said there was something inherently wrong with the system.

An accountability system designed to measure performance cannot compare apples and oranges. As a science teacher, I know that such a system simply will not yield any meaningful data. The children I teach in any given year will have completely different educational needs than the children I teach in the following year. NCLB fails to recognize that children learn in different ways and at different rates. It fails to recognize that children are human beings, not widgets in a factory, and that teaching them is both an art AND a science.

One of our members from Rockford, IL has noted the illogical consequences of the current system:

“Jackson Elementary School teachers worked tirelessly in the first year of corrective action to bring up scores to the level set by NCLB. The students made incredible gains, unfortunately they missed AYP by less than one percent. This translates to one or two students that made gains, but not enough to bring them to the prescribed level. Therefore, they are in their second year of corrective action and labeled as a failing school.”

The current system simply fails to provide useful, timely data for diagnosing learning problems and facilitating instructional changes. Rather, students who are tested in one grade move on to the next grade, and their new teacher receives their test results—results that have virtually no relevance to the choices that new teacher will make in instructional strategies.

Not only is the current underlying system flawed, but implementation is also troubling. NCLB requires assessments to be built upon states’ content standards, which in turn are to be aligned with statewide assessments. Yet, four and a half years into the law, only ten states have received full approval from the Department of Education for their content standards and assessment systems. To educators, this translates as a lack of interest in what is tested and whether the test content has actually been taught in the classroom. It appears that the goal is simply to administer tests and assign accountability labels. This is demoralizing to educators and contradictory to sound educational practice.

NEA is not alone in supporting an improved accountability system that allows for use of more accurate measures. We have led an effort to develop consensus on a broad set of principles for ESEA reauthorization. To date, 87 organizations have endorsed these principles, one of which calls for use of growth models as part of an accountability framework (See Appendix III for the complete Joint Organizational Statement on NCLB with the list of signatories). In addition, nine bills that would allow use of growth models are currently pending in Congress. Some of those bills were introduced by members of this committee, including Representatives McColm, Wu, and Andrews. Several other committee members, including Representatives Grijalva, Ryan, and Woolsey, have cosponsored bills that would allow states to utilize growth models.

Governors and state legislatures have also called on a bipartisan basis for more flexibility to use growth models. The National Governors Association’s (NGA) proposals for the ESEA reauthorization, issued in March 2006, state that, “Maximum flexibility in designing state accountability systems, including testing, is critical to preserve the amalgamation of federal funding, local control of education, and state responsibility for system-wide reform.”

Similarly, the National Conference of State Legislatures issued a report in February 2005 calling on Congress to make substantial changes to the law. The report states:

“Administrators at the state, local and school levels are overwhelmed by AYP because it holds schools to overly prescriptive expectations, does not acknowledge differences in individual performance, does not recognize significant academic progress because it relies on absolute achievement targets, and inappropriately increases the likelihood of failure for diverse schools.”

By allowing inclusion of growth models in NCLB’s accountability system, Congress would not have to abandon the requirement that all students read and complete math problems on grade level. Quite the opposite is true. We believe that growth models hold greater promise to demonstrate whether a student is learning. They would provide a more accurate measure by giving schools credit both for moving a child from below basic to basic as well as moving a child from proficient to advanced. They would also offer a way to recognize highly effective schools that have an influx of students who are not performing at grade level.

Growth models will also help overcome the all-or-nothing approach of measuring Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Currently, a typical school has to meet 37 criteria to make AYP. A school that falls short on just one of the 37 is treated in the same manner as a school that fails all 37 criteria. (See tables below) Growth models that

offer more common sense ways to measure student achievement, in particular for students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELL), will ameliorate this problem.

CURRENT AYP FAILURE SCHOOL: MISS 1 OF 37

	Reading	95%	Math	95%	Other indicator
All Students .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Black/African American .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Hispanic .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Native American .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Asian .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
White .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
ELL .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Poverty .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Disability .....	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	

CURRENT AYP FAILURE SCHOOL: MISS ALL

	Reading	95%	Math	95%	Other indicator
All Students .....	No	No	No	No	No
Black/African American .....	No	No	No	No	
Hispanic .....	No	No	No	No	
Native American .....	No	No	No	No	
Asian .....	No	No	No	No	
White .....	No	No	No	No	
LEP .....	No	No	No	No	
Poverty .....	No	No	No	No	
Disability .....	No	No	No	No	

However, the use of growth models will not completely eliminate this problem. If one subgroup makes AYP using a growth model, while another subgroup in the school does not make AYP (even using the growth model), the school will still be designated as failing AYP. In this instance, the use of the growth model doesn't eliminate the "all or nothing" approach.

I would also note that there are differences among growth models, with varying levels of complexity. Some states, like North Carolina, have had to implement a different growth formula for students not already proficient than for students who are proficient. This was necessary because of the federal requirement that proficiency be the end result of any growth trajectory. Obviously, such a model does not work for students who already are proficient.

I would like to close my comments on growth models by reminding the committee that having a growth model as part of the AYP process is an improvement but it will not be a panacea. Getting certain students on track to proficiency within a four-year timeline, as is required under North Carolina's approved model, will still be a challenge for many schools. In addition, complexities will continue to arise for some ELL students or certain students with disabilities who take alternate assessments. We will also continue to need much more research about growth models as well as technical assistance to states, local districts, and educators to evaluate and use data, evaluate the models themselves, and replicate successful efforts. The ultimate goal should be to help classroom educators use data to inform instruction.

### III. NEA's Work to Close Achievement Gaps

It has been a majority priority of mine to marshal NEA resources to assist our state and local affiliates in seeking policy changes at the state and local level to help close achievement gaps. Our work has included:

Committing more than \$6 million through NEA Foundation grants to close achievement gaps in urban school districts. Those grants fund programs with clear goals of improving literacy and math and science achievement; helping stabilize quality staff; and involving families and communities involved in the learning process. In two of the grant sites, Hamilton County, Tennessee and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, school faculties use growth data to assess progress in reading and mathematics and determine appropriate interventions for instructional improvement. Reaching ambitious growth targets provides confidence and positive reinforcement

to teachers and students who have large gaps to overcome and helps teachers and administrators set continuous benchmarks for progress and observe what works in changing instructional practice. For example, last year in Hamilton County, Tennessee, the five schools targeted under the NEA grant set and achieved a goal of 115 percent of the expected growth according to state standards per annum in reading and mathematics achievement. While these schools have not yet all reached high levels of achievement compared to the state's affluent schools, they have made greater gains than many of the top-ranked schools. By significantly accelerating the rate of achievement, low-performing schools can close achievement gaps, while all schools continue to make progress.

Delivering trainings and products on a variety of instructional issues, including closing the achievement gaps, to our members and leaders across the country.

Sponsoring statewide National Board Certified Teacher summits focused on recruiting and retaining accomplished teachers in high-need, high-poverty schools with low student achievement.

Developing and sharing with all NEA affiliates our Closing Achievement Gaps: An Association Guide—a blueprint for closing the gaps.

Awarding grants to ten states (Colorado, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania) focused on closing gaps through changes in state policies such as early childhood education, coaching for new principals, statewide teacher induction programs, and revised state professional development guidelines. We have also provided grants to eight states for their work to encourage highly skilled teachers to move to and stay in high-need schools.

Continuing the partnership established in 2005 with the Tom Joyner Foundation to increase the percentage of highly qualified Black teachers in targeted high-needs communities. The Teacher Licensure Scholarship Program, funded by the Tom Joyner Foundation, provides financial assistance to historically Black colleges and universities to assist minority teachers in preparation for licensure exams. More than 250 scholarships have already been awarded nationally through this program.

Developing training modules on closing the achievement gaps for use in community conversations. This work has been piloted in Mississippi and Florida and will be used by the end of this program year in three of the seven states that have been awarded grants to convene community conversations.

Surveying, through the Center for Teacher Quality, teachers in three states (Kansas, Arizona, Ohio,) to identify the necessary working conditions to achieve optimum teaching and learning environments.

Developing online professional development focused on helping teachers become more effective with a diverse student body.

Awarding grants to recognize model teacher retention program through a Saturn-UAW-NEA partnership.

Launching and maintaining an easily accessible, interactive Website to help our affiliates and the general public research and locate resources about the achievement gaps ([www.achievementgaps.org](http://www.achievementgaps.org)).

In the near future, NEA will develop a program guide outlining effective support strategies for minority candidates pursuing National Board Certification, with the goal of increasing the percentage of minority National Board Certified teachers in high-need schools. In the next school year, we will convene community conversations in seven states as part of our Public Engagement Project (PEP) initiative. We will also develop additional educational materials for state affiliates on teaching and working conditions, and we will be announcing additional grants for 2006-07. Finally, NEA is building a state-by-state database to identify policies, practices and programs that help close the achievement gaps. I would be happy to share additional information on any of our projects with the committee.

Before I conclude, I would like to share just one of the many stories from countless NEA members about the impact of ESEA on them and their students. It is a story about a boy named Cesar and his ESL teacher, Mary Beth Solano in Fort Collins, CO. She writes:

“One of my recent student's stories is a prime example of how NCLB legislation, by labeling students unfairly, is demoralizing and needs to be changed. Cesar, a third grade student, came to me in August with not word one of English. Together with his classroom teacher, significant work with me, and a fantastic group of peers, he learned English amazingly quickly.

I was almost going to exempt him from the test, but two things stopped me. One, the part of NCLB that says that any child who doesn't take the test counts as a zero for our school's report card, and Cesar himself, who set as his personal goal knowing enough English to pass CSAP (Colorado's state mandated NCLB test). Reluctantly, but with Cesar's terrific desire to succeed coaxing us on, we had him take

the test. He struggled and struggled, reading every word \* \* \* over and over again until he thought he understood well enough to answer each question.

He worked so hard and so long on that test, it brought tears to my eyes. He was so proud of himself after he completed it, you should have seen his face. Remember, he had only been working in English since August and the reading test was given in February \* \* \* six short months with a new language, and he took the same test as native speakers did. He kept asking what his score was, and actually looked forward to the day his parents would get 'the letter'. Well, the scores came out, and while we celebrated (understanding statistics and scoring), he and his family were devastated. Cesar earned a score that was only two tiny points below the cut off for partially proficient on CSAP, but below the cut off it was, so he was labeled an 'Unsatisfactory' learner.

Nothing could be farther from the truth for he had gone from basically zero to almost proficient in just six months (something no politician has ever done), but the federal government didn't care about that effort or progress. To the feds, the state and the public he was unsatisfactory. I tried explaining it all to his parents, and tried even harder to lift Cesar's spirits, but I'm not sure how much success I had. Without changes in the structure and process of reporting scores, stories like Cesar's will continue to deflate and demoralize the best and brightest students."

On behalf of all 2.8 million members of the National Education Association, I want to thank you for this opportunity. We look forward to working with you throughout the reauthorization process. I encourage every member of this committee to talk to your local educators about their experiences. Ask them about their frustrations. But more importantly, ask them about their successes. When you do, you'll get as clear a sense as I have. They all have a "Cesar" story. They all want every one of their students to succeed. And they go above and beyond the call of duty time and time again to make that goal a reality for America's public school students.

Thank you. I will be happy to answer any questions.

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Chairman MCKEON. Thank you.  
Ms. Haycock?

#### **STATEMENT OF KATI HAYCOCK, DIRECTOR, THE EDUCATION TRUST**

Ms. HAYCOCK. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Miller, and members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to come speak with you this morning about whether the addition of a growth component can improve the NCLB accountability system.

As you know, I head the Education Trust, and in that role I spend an awful lot of time with educators around the country, including on accountability matters. I also serve as one of 10 members of the peer review committee assembled by the secretary of education to review the proposals from states.

My simple answer to your overarching question this morning is yes, incorporating growth models can improve accountability systems. Such improved systems won't necessarily guarantee, in and of themselves, more quality education, but they can help.

The reason for that is because accountability systems that grant appropriate credit for growth can help in four ways.

First, they can help local and state education leaders to prioritize the schools that need the most help by distinguishing between schools where the kids may not yet be at proficient, but they are on their way to being proficient in a few years, and those schools where kids are on a trajectory to get nowhere at all.

Second, they can help ensure that the problem that Chancellor Klein talked about, schools focusing just on kids right below the proficient bar, doesn't happen as often, that they are working on growth for all kids.

Third, they can help education leaders set stretch goals for all schools, including the higher achieving schools that my friend Bill Sanders here talks about as the slide-and-glide schools.

And finally, they can help to get rid of the perception by some people at least that the NCLB accountability system is arbitrary and unfair. That said, suggesting that the inclusion of those measures can improve accountability systems is different from guaranteeing that the inclusion of such components will improve the system.

So let me focus, if I can, on the principles and conditions that will help to maximize impact. But before I do that, just a word or two on the peer review process. I think you know that the secretary assembled a quite diverse group of peer reviewers.

It included representatives from state education agencies, local school districts, assessment experts and child advocates. We were a diverse group in every way, including politically.

Despite that, however, we came to full agreement on every single substantive issue that we have faced. And in fact, the conversations among the peer reviewers were so substantive that we actually wrote up a public summary of that that we all signed in order to help states assemble future growth proposals.

I do want to share with you, though, the two most fundamentally important findings from that group. First, despite perceptions that the current AYP system is unnecessarily rigid and crude, the current system actually gets it right most of the time.

It turns out that schools that don't make AYP in a system that does not include a growth component actually most often don't make AYP in a system that does include it. In both of the states that we approved, fewer than 50 schools that didn't make AYP actually made AYP with a growth component included.

Second, it is really important to understand that growth to proficiency in most cases is actually a higher bar, a tougher standard, than the current status system.

In North Carolina, for example, if accountability systems decisions had been made entirely on growth, actually, fewer schools would have made AYP instead of more. Why is that? Because lots of schools that are now over the status bar are actually not growing their kids very much.

So growth isn't an easier standard at all, but done right it can help. Let me talk about four or five principles for doing it right. No. 1, as Mr. Miller suggested, it is really important and you insist on growth to proficiency. Any old growth won't do.

No. 2, once a student's growth trajectory is established with a goal of proficiency within 4 years, you don't want to allow it to be reset and reset again.

Third, growth models need to set goals for proficient students as well. The reason for that is very simple. A lot of students who are proficient 1 year won't be proficient the next year or the year after unless they get some focused attention as well.

Fourth, just as in the current law you have not allowed schools to average and mask the low performance of some kids with the high performance of others, it is also important that you not allow schools to mask the low growth of some students with the high growth of others.

Finally, it is always important to ask the question growth to what. Just as averaging performance can mask the underachievement of some groups of kids, too low a standard can mask problems with the performance of students.

We need to have high and rigorous standards if growth is something—is actually to matter at all. We need to be focused more on where kids are going than simply where they have been.

One final comment, though. Improving NCLB's accountability system is an important undertaking. But we need to keep it in perspective. When you look overseas, what you find is most other countries sort of got about the business of standards and accountability fast and then moved on to improvement.

We Americans, however, keep obsessing about how to get that accountability system a little bit better instead of focusing on what is really important, and that is improving teaching and learning, helping low performance schools get better, making sure we have quality teachers and that they are distributed fairly, and also providing the curriculum and benchmark assessment that teachers need to make sure they are doing the job right.

In the end, that is what is going to get us to higher achievement, not simply a better accountability system. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Haycock follows:]

**Prepared Statement of Kati Haycock, Director, the Education Trust**

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Miller, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning regarding the potential of growth measures to improve school accountability determinations.

As you know, I head the Education Trust, an independent, non-profit organization focused on improving achievement and closing gaps between groups, pre-kindergarten through college. In that role, I and my colleagues do a lot of work with both states and school districts, including frequent opportunities to advise on and observe the effects of accountability systems. I also served as one of ten members of the Peer Review Team assembled by Secretary Spellings to advise her on proposals for the Growth Model Pilot program.

My simple answer to your overarching question is, yes, incorporating growth measures can improve accountability systems. They don't in and of themselves ensure improved education for all students, but growth measures can help.

First, using growth measures can help education leaders to prioritize the schools that need the most help. Giving schools credit for growth in students' learning can help distinguish between schools where, though students are not yet proficient, they are on a trajectory to become proficient soon—and those where students are on a trajectory to nowhere. These more nuanced determinations can help to ensure that help and resources are targeted to the schools and students with the most acute needs.

Second, establishing credit for growth can help to ensure that schools don't focus inordinate attention on students who are just below proficient, but rather seek to grow the knowledge and skills of students at all ends of the achievement spectrum—including the middle-achieving low-income and minority students who could become high achievers with more challenging instruction.

Third, the inclusion of growth measures can help education leaders to set stretch goals for all schools, including the higher achieving schools that Bill Sanders often calls the "Slide and Glide" Schools.

Finally, establishing credit for growth can reduce the perception of some that the NCLB accountability system is arbitrary and unfair, especially to schools that receive large numbers of underprepared students.

That said, suggesting that the inclusion of growth measures can improve accountability systems is different from guaranteeing that it will. So rather than spending my time with you extolling the virtues of growth measures, let me focus instead on what I think I've learned about the principles and conditions that must undergird these or any other changes in accountability systems.

But first a word about the peer review process.

### *The Peer Review Process*

In November 2005, the U.S. Secretary of Education announced a growth model pilot program, with the stated goal of informing the reauthorization of NCLB. Several months later, she named a panel of ten peer reviewers.

The peer reviewers represented a broad cross section of experts and stakeholders, including practitioners from state departments of education and school districts, as well as outside researchers, assessment experts and child advocates. The group included both liberals and conservatives.

Despite our different perspectives, however, we reached consensus on every significant aspect in our review of the states' growth model proposals. Indeed, our conversations were so constructive and substantive that the peer review panel took the extraordinary step of publicly releasing a statement of principles—signed by every member of the team—to help inform subsequent discussions of these issues. I'll draw from that statement in just a moment.

I do, however, want to share what were perhaps the two most important findings from our work:

- First, despite perceptions that it is unnecessarily rigid and crude, the current AYP system actually gets it right most of the time. In both states that were approved to implement growth models, most of the schools that didn't make AYP without a growth component also did not make AYP with a growth component. As it turns out, schools with low achievement also tend to be schools with low growth. In each state, fewer than 50 schools that made growth targets that had not made AYP under the current rules.

- Second, in most cases, growth to proficiency is actually a higher bar than the current status system. In North Carolina, for example, if accountability determinations were based solely on growth, fewer schools would have met their goals. Why? Because a lot of schools that are now over the status bar are actually not growing their students' knowledge and skills very much.

So growth isn't an easier standard at all. But, done right, it can both enhance the fundamental fairness of the system and provide the more nuanced information necessary to help leaders target resources and assistance to the schools and students with the most acute needs.

### *Principles*

So what are the principles that should undergird this or any other change in the NCLB accountability system?

First and foremost, we must be very clear that any old growth won't do. Congress must insist on growth to proficiency. It's important to recall why you focused the nation on the goal of student proficiency in the first place. The reality is that there are absolute standards against which students will be judged, whether they go right to work or into postsecondary education. In the real world, there won't be allowances based on family background or parents' education level.

If public education is going to serve as an engine of upward mobility, then expectations need to be pegged not just to where students come from, but where they need to go. A growth model can provide incentives to focus on students at all levels of achievement, but the goal must still be proficiency for all students.

Some argue that this is somehow unfair to schools that serve concentrations of poor children. Our collective responsibility, however, must be to the students themselves. And frankly it's unfair to them not to require schools and districts to take responsibility for student achievement.

Second, once a student's growth trajectory is established, it's the school system's responsibility to catch the student up within the designated time frame. If the expectation is that a student will reach proficiency in three or four years, the targets should not be reset downwards nor should the time frame generally be extended. Otherwise, students will never actually be expected to be proficient.

Third, as the peer review committee suggested, growth models should set goals for proficient students. This is especially important because many students who perform at the proficient level one year will not be proficient in subsequent years without explicit attention to their needs. This is one of the reasons why, in recent years, we've observed a pattern on both NAEP and state tests in which more students are proficient on elementary tests than in the middle or high school grades. Growth models should orient educators toward students' success in successive years.

Fourth, any growth models should retain NCLB's historic focus on individual students. If, as some suggest, we look at the average growth for a whole school, high growth with some students will mask the stagnant or slow growth—and even the academic decline—of other students. One of NCLB's strengths is that it does not allow schools to compensate for the under-education of low-achieving students by having a greater number of advanced students. Likewise, schools should not com-

compensate for some students' stagnant growth by showing greater growth with higher-achieving students.

Looking at the growth of individual students over time requires assessments that are aligned from year to year and longitudinal data systems. Many states still do not have these in place, limiting their ability to implement growth models. The quality of assessments and data systems is critically important to the accuracy and validity of growth measures, so focusing on state capacity and resources in this area needs to be a priority.

Finally, it is important to ask the question, "growth to what?" Just as averages can mask under-achievement by some groups of students, so too can standards that are not sufficiently rigorous. If schools can meet their goals not only based on students that are meeting standards, but also on growth toward these standards, it becomes even more important to have meaningful, high-level standards. As Congress considers allowing states to incorporate growth into accountability, it is important to revisit the hands-off approach that has ignored the rigor of state standards.

#### *Accountability Alone Is Not Adequate*

Improving NCLB's accountability system is an important undertaking, and the inclusion of a growth component guided by these principles can help.

But we need to keep all this in perspective. Even the best accountability system is essentially a signaling system, helping educators, policymakers, and the public-at-large to understand whether schools are meeting their goals.

I'm the last person to dismiss the power of accountability systems to improve coherence and focus in systems of public education that often lack both. Certainly, there is evidence that standards and accountability help: This year's edition of Education Week's Quality Counts report concluded that states with stronger implementation of accountability have seen appreciably bigger gains on NAEP, bolstering earlier findings from a study by the RAND Corporation. And NCLB's focus on accountability for different groups of students has provided critically important leverage to get systems of public education responding to the needs of low-income and minority students.

What's really important, however, is improving teaching and learning. No amount of tweaking the accountability system will solve the serious, systemic problems plaguing our public schools. Indeed, I worry that, unlike in other countries, where leaders adopt standards and accountability systems and then move quickly to improvement activities, we Americans keep focusing the bulk of our energy on making accountability systems ever better.

There are some critical improvement issues that demand their own attention:

**Capacity to turn around struggling schools:** As a country, we've made a policy decision to no longer tolerate widespread failure in public education. This marks a historic shift, and one that was long overdue. But the old state and district systems were built when low-performing schools were considered acceptable and even inevitable, and weren't set up to diagnose problems and intervene in struggling schools.

We need to rapidly expand the expertise and the resources focused on turning around persistently low-performing schools. The current budget proposal to dedicate \$200 million to the school improvement fund is a good idea, in part because it sends a signal to the states that this is a priority. But right now states aren't investing enough of their own resources in this area, and demand far outpaces ability to respond.

**Teacher Quality:** We cannot close achievement gaps without closing gaps in access to teacher quality. Recent research from Illinois documented that students who studied all the way through Calculus in schools with the lowest teacher quality learned less math than students who only went through Algebra 2 in schools with just average teacher quality. Yet Congress has continued to pour billions of dollars into systems, ostensibly to help educate poor kids, only to have systems provide these students with the least access to qualified teachers and high-quality teaching.

Recently, for the first time in the four-year history of NCLB's implementation, the U.S. Department of Education required states to develop equity plans to ensure poor and minority students get their fair share of teacher talent. And Congress has encouraged innovation in teacher assignment, evaluation, and compensation by creating the Teacher Incentive Fund. These are important steps, but raising teacher quality and ensuring equal access to effective teachers must remain a bipartisan priority.

Title 2 of NCLB is by far the biggest investment in raising teacher quality, especially in school districts with high proportions of low-income students. With Title 2, Congress gave districts virtually unfettered discretion to use the money as they saw fit. The result has been general programs that diluted the targeted support envisioned by Congress, with no discernable impact on teacher quality distribution de-



spite a \$3 billion annual investment. Congress should conduct an intense inquiry into how Title 2 is being implemented and stipulate better targeting, but should not cut \$300 million from the program, as is currently proposed.

Curriculum development with aligned benchmark assessments: In the early days of standards-based reform, leaders thought that standards themselves would provide sufficient guidance to teachers about what to teach and to what level. They believed that teachers themselves would figure out how to get students to those standards.

It turns out that most teachers neither want to develop their own curriculum nor have the skills to do it. Rather, they need coherent, well-designed lessons, units and assignments that they can use day to day. Fortunately, states and districts are doing more and more along these lines, in part to try to reach their accountability goals.

They are also doing more with the kinds of regular, teacher-friendly, "benchmark" assessments that teachers need to gauge their students' progress toward state standards.

While states and districts have increased their activity and funding in this arena, the federal government could play an important role in bringing these practices to scale by targeting grants in this area to jurisdictions that have good data systems and want to submit these activities to rigorous evaluation, so that lessons can be learned and widely disseminated.

#### *Conclusion*

I wish I could report to you that the culture of accountability and continuous improvement had permeated public education, so that you could hand back more discretion to the states to set accountability on their own terms. But nothing in our history or the current climate suggests that we have made enough progress on this front. In fact, some of the push for growth models is a ruse to distract attention from the stark reality that many of our schools themselves must grow a lot, and fast. Several of the states that clamored the loudest for growth models did not even apply for the pilot because they do not have the requisite assessments or data systems in place. For some of the most outspoken critics, the focus on growth amounts to little more than an attempt to diminish public support for meaningful accountability.

Incorporating growth is a good idea and Congress should not be deterred because some of its boosters have mixed motives. But it does mean that you must be vigilant in scrutinizing proposals to ensure that core principles are preserved and strengthened.

Strong accountability is the most important leverage we have to focus public education on continuous improvement and the quest for equal educational opportunity. The consequences of weakening accountability will reverberate in the nation's military preparedness, economic vitality, and social cohesion.

Basing school accountability determinations on measures of individual students' growth over time can improve accountability, and those improvements can help ensure that public education targets its resources to the students who need the most help. I do not in any way want to diminish the importance of getting accountability systems to be as good as they can be.

But we have got to get beyond this never-ending quest for the perfect accountability system and turn to the hard work of curriculum development, teacher professional development, and leadership training for principals.

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Chairman McKEON. Thank you.  
Dr. Sanders?

#### **STATEMENT OF WILLIAM L. SANDERS, PH.D., SENIOR MANAGER, VALUE-ADDED ASSESSMENT AND RESEARCH, SAS INSTITUTE, INC.**

Mr. SANDERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Miller, members of the committee. I am honored by your invitation.

My letter of invitation asked me to comment on my experiences with value-added and growth models, how growth or value-added models might fit into state-developed accountability systems under No Child Left Behind, benefits and challenges of implementation,

as well as some of our major research findings that we have accumulated over the past 24 years.

In my remarks I will refer to each of these requests. However, the total intent of my remarks will be to make the case to Congress that the addition of a properly constructed growth component to the adequate yearly progress measure will make NCLB fairer to schools and will provide positive benefits to a greater percentage of their student populations.

My experiences—I am a statistician that fortuitously got involved with educational research 24 years ago. At that time in Tennessee, there was considerable discussion how to improve the effectiveness of public schooling for that state's populations.

These discussions inevitably led to the question of how to quantitatively measure the impact of schooling on measures of academic performance, especially academic growth.

In fact—and I think this is important for the committee to recognize—in fact, some of the same quantitative issues that are now being raised relative to the growth model discussions were indeed being raised in that era.

After learning of these issues, and my personal knowledge of statistical mixed model theory and methodology, I felt then, and I certainly believe even more deeply today, that there exist solutions to many of the pertinent questions that are often cited as impediments to using student test data to provide quantitative, reliable, robust measures of schooling influences.

Our work over the past 24 years has certainly been about refining the statistical methodology for application to the educational measurement arena.

Now, next, Mr. Chairman, what I would like to do is to try to make a distinction between value-added models and growth models in the context of No Child Left Behind.

Value-added models and growth models—and I often refer to them as projection models—all use longitudinal data, as Chancellor Klein has mentioned—in other words, following the progress of each student as an individual.

In value-added models like the Tennessee value-added assessment system, the purpose is to essentially get a measure of the impact, a summative measure of the impact that that school is having on the rate of progress of all students.

In the context of No Child Left Behind and in the context of what I would certainly recommend Congress consider, the projection models use longitudinal data but for a different purpose. The purpose is to essentially take the data for an individual child and develop a projection of whether or not that child is on a trajectory to meet a meaningful academic standard in the future.

Let me give you a specific example. In Memphis, there is a school, and I could certainly point to many other schools, where the average entering 3rd-grader profiles at about the 25th percentile point relative to all 3rd-graders in the state of Tennessee—very low-achieving kids entering that school.

Yet by the end of 5th grade in that school, the average kid is scoring at the 45th percentile point relative to all kids in that school. That school in the past has failed AYP because under exist-

ing rules you have got to aggregate the 3rd-grade scores, the 4th-grade scores, the 5th-grade scores.

In my view, that is not a failing school. That is an excellent, outstanding, effective school. So to me, the addition of the growth measure could enable schools like that to be recognized proudly for their effectiveness.

Now, even with the additional augmentation of AYP, as two states have, as was mentioned, now been approved in a pilot project by the Department of Education, there is another consideration that Congress should give prior to reauthorization of No Child Left Behind. And basically, I will be restating what Chancellor Klein said.

There are a lot of schools, and I certainly could show you many, that have presently passed AYP, presently passed adequate yearly progress, yet when you look in those schools you will often see that those students have a projection whereby that they will not be proficient in the future.

And this notion that unwittingly we put this perverse incentive in too many places to teach to the bubble kids, the kids just below proficiency such that if we get them over the bar, then we will tend to raise our percent proficient.

And often, this is at the exclusion of those children that are so far behind we are not going to get them over the bar this year, and also at the exclusion of those children that are already above the bar because they are going to be proficient anyway.

This is the kind of thing that if there is a projection component included in the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind, I think some of that disincentive will be removed.

Now, NCLB, in my view, is beginning to yield many positive results and raising the nation's academic achievement for a large segment of the student population. The suggested tweaking with addition of a projection component will be an improvement.

And certainly our research accumulated over the past 24 years certainly has documented that effective schooling sustained over time will trump socioeconomic influences.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sanders follows:]

**Prepared Statement of William L. Sanders, Ph.D., Senior Manager, Value-Added Assessment and Research, SAS Institute, Inc.**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is William L. Sanders; I am presently Senior Manager, Value-added Research and Assessment, SAS Institute, Inc. Additionally, I hold the honorary title of Senior Research Fellow with the University of North Carolina. Previously, I was Professor and Director of the Value-Added Research and Assessment Center with the University of Tennessee.

My letter of invitation asked me to comment on: my experience with value-added and growth models, how growth or value-added models might fit into State developed accountability systems under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), benefits and challenges of implementation, as well as some of our major research findings. In my remarks I will refer to each of these requests. However, the total intent of my remarks will be to make the case to Congress that the addition of a properly constructed growth component to the adequate yearly progress measure (AYP) will make NCLB fairer to schools and will provide positive benefits to a greater percentage of their student populations.

My experiences. I am a statistician that fortuitously got involved with educational research 24 years ago. At that time in Tennessee, under the leadership of Governor Lamar Alexander, there was considerable discussion on how to improve the effectiveness of public schooling for that state's population of students. These discussions

inevitably lead to the question of how to quantitatively measure the impact of schooling on measures of academic performance, especially measures of academic growth attributable to various schooling entities. In fact, some of the same quantitative issues that are now being raised relative to the growth model discussions were indeed being raised in that era. After learning of these issues, and being knowledgeable of statistical mixed model theory and methodology, I felt that there existed solutions to many of the pertinent questions being cited as impediments to using student test data to provide quantitative, reliable robust measures of schooling influences on the rate of academic progress of student populations.

Using this methodology, my colleagues and I built the quantitative system on which the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System is based. Perhaps I was not the first, but one of the first to apply the term “value added assessment” to measurement of educational outcome. Value-added assessment provides measures of the influence that educational entities, (i.e. districts, schools and classrooms) have on the rate of student academic progress. All value-added procedures use longitudinal data (i.e. follow the progress of individual students over grades) to get measures of these influences. These measures provide information as to the effectiveness schools or districts in providing the opportunity for academic progress for all students. Tennessee has had value-added measures as part of its accountability system since 1993.

However, all value-added modeling efforts do not give equivalent results. Some of the more simplistic value-added approaches should be rejected because of serious biases and/or unreliable estimates that they provide. If value-added models are to be used as part of an accountability system, then there are some minimal criteria that must be required. To dampen the error of measurement associated with a single test score for an individual student, all test data over grades and subjects for each individual student must be used in the analysis. However, all students do not have the same quantity of test data. Disproportionately low scoring students have more missing longitudinal data than higher scoring students. Thus, any value-added model approach must be sophisticated enough to provide unbiased, reliable measures using all data for each student no matter how sparse or complete. Simple posttest minus pretest averages and simple regression approaches, which use only the previous year's score as a predictor variable, are examples of value-added attempts that should not be used.

Next, I would like to make a distinction between the use of value-added models (like the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System) and growth, or projection models to be used as part of NCLB. In accountability systems, value-added models use longitudinal data to provide a summative measure of the aggregate progress of all students attending a school. The projection (growth) model recently approved for Tennessee to augment AYP uses longitudinal data to ascertain if a student is on a trajectory to reach a proficiency standard three years in the future. The same data structure is used for two different purposes. However, the same statistical issues (fractured student records, using all data for each student, etc.) are just as important and must be accommodated in the projection (growth) models as with the value-added models. Again some of the more simplistic approaches to measurement of growth should not be used because of the resulting innate biases and greater unreliability. On this topic, I concur with the U.S. Department of Education's peer review team's comment that all of each student's prior data should be used; not just two data points.

Why should NCLB be augmented to allow projection (growth) models? Students enter a school with a wide range of achievement levels. Under existing rules if a school has an entering population whose achievement level is extremely low, then regardless of the magnitude of progress of these students, it is most difficult for the school to make its AYP targets. For those schools which are eliciting superior academic growth for its student population, this additional measure can clearly differentiate these schools and enable them to be recognized proudly for their effectiveness.

Even with the additional augmentation of AYP, as two states have now been approved in a pilot project by the Department of Education, there is another consideration that Congress should give prior to reauthorization of NCLB. With the existing AYP rules, schools can now be meeting their AYP targets, yet within those schools the progress rates of students who are currently proficient can be so relatively modest that their likelihood of not meeting proficiency in the future is greatly enhanced. Unfortunately, it appears that in too many schools, which are in jeopardy of not meeting their AYP targets, more instructional effort is focused on the “bubble kids”, (i.e. those kids who are perceived to be near proficiency) with less effort extended for other students. The mistaken belief is that some students are so far behind that regardless of effort they will not reach proficiency this year, while other students

are going to meet the proficiency requirements without much curricular attention. The focus on “bubble” students leaves two groups of students vulnerable, those most behind academically and those barely proficient.

To provide a disincentive for this practice, I would recommend that Congress give serious consideration to replacing the existing “safe harbor” component of the AYP rules with a projection component so that schools will receive credit for keeping all students on trajectories to be proficient in the future. This should tend to alleviate the problem of not focusing appropriate instructional effort on all students. All states will now have the annual testing in place to allow for the projection approach to be applied. At a minimum, states should be allowed to substitute this better approach for the existing “safe harbor” rules.

In summary, the impact of NCLB is beginning to yield many positive results in raising the academic achievement level for a large segment of the nation’s student population. The suggested tweaking with the addition of a projection (growth) component will be an improvement. Our research accumulated on the past 24 years, certainly has documented that effective schooling will trump socio-economic influences if effective schooling is sustained over time for each student. The data resulting from the implementation of NCLB, if wisely used, can certainly lay the information base for insuring that all students will have the opportunity to learn, consistent with their achievement level.

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Chairman McKEON. Well, thank you very much.

This has been very interesting. I was listening to Mr. Miller’s opening comments and my opening comments, and there is not a lot of difference.

I think one thing that is exciting to me as we move forward—we have had now—this is the fourth hearing on getting ready for the reauthorization. Each one of them has been good. This one has been excellent.

I have no agenda. It doesn’t sound like Mr. Miller has any agenda, other than improving on what we did when we wrote the No Child Left Behind. We are not trying to say this is something we want to emphasize.

We want to listen to experts like you find out what can be done to make it better. And as we go through this process, we are going to be listening very carefully. That sounds like the ultimate goal, and I am hopeful that we are going to be able to continue to work in a bipartisan way to really make this happen, because it is too important to not do that.

I forget now which one of you mentioned—it was probably Chancellor Klein—about “gotcha.” You know, I have some concerns about government at all levels—or not just government, but people that have that attitude, of trying to find people doing something wrong rather than trying to encourage people to do what is right.

And I hope that we don’t have that attitude, that all we want to do is find something wrong. And I think that is a poor management model. Better to find what people are doing right and focus on that. And government’s role should be how can we help you do better, not can we find what you are doing wrong.

And I think several of you mentioned the importance of principals, assistance principals, teachers, parents, because we are all in this together. There has been a lot of focus on teachers, but I know I go to school sometimes and I can see—just as you walk on the campus, you can feel the influence of a great principal.

You can feel the influence of a great superintendent. You can feel the influence of an assistant principal. You go into the classroom, you can feel the influence of a great teacher. You can also feel the influence of a teacher that is not measuring up.

And I am hopeful that from your testimony today—and I think this is important. We have to do this. But I would rather get away from this kind of a setting and sit around in a circle and really have some give and take and some real meaningful discussion about—you are all experts.

Really, you can teach us a lot. And maybe we can also do some of those kind of settings as we move forward, just have some real round-table discussions and go into some of this stuff in depth.

One thing, though. I think one of the problems we have had with No Child Left Behind is people have put, you know, different labels on things, and sometimes we have gotten blamed for things that are part of state government. We say that states have standards, and then we get blamed for the standards the states set.

Dr. Weaver, in the conclusion of your testimony you told the story about this young student, and I think that grabbed all of us. He was devastated when he didn't pass an exam and he was labeled an unsatisfactory learner.

What responsibility do you think the teachers have for ensuring that students really understand the role of state-developed assessments and the fact that NCLB judges the progress of schools, not individual students?

And do teachers have a role in ensuring the public understands that nothing in Federal law labels schools as failing?

Mr. WEAVER. I think that if we understand the rules, if we understand the law, if we understand what it is we are supposed to do, then I think that we can be good messengers.

However, there have been so many mixed messages. There have been many stops and many starts. And so it has left a number of people, not only teachers—but it has left a number of people uncertain as to what it is that we are supposed to do.

Also, when it comes to the involvement of people, teachers, regardless of what position, involvement of those individuals in implementation, it makes it much easier if, in fact, we have been involved or included in terms of determining what that outcome is going to be.

However, in many instances, we have had decisions made for us, without us, in spite of us, without even talking with us. And then the expectation is that we implement it. That is not a good way to encourage good implementation. I don't think it works at our level. I don't think it works at your level. I don't think it works at any level.

So the more that we are—

Chairman McKEON. Or any business.

Mr. WEAVER. Absolutely. The more that we are involved in helping to shape the circumstances that impact us, I think the better off we all will be.

Chairman McKEON. Thank you. I have a whole lot of other stuff I would like to talk about, but my time is up.

Mr. Miller?

Mr. MILLER. Thank you very much.

Thank you for participating this morning. We look forward to spending a lot of time with you all as we move forward in this process. I want to make sort of a comment and then maybe get your

reaction, because I won't have time for individual questions this morning.

But back in the days of yesterday when I was a kid, I brought home a report card at the end of my 4th-grade year, and it said either 4th-grade reading, 4th-grade math, 4.5, 3.5, whatever, so my parents said, OK, you are doing all right.

And if I brought home the next one and it said—at the end of my 5th grade and it said 4.5, my parents said, you are falling behind here, you are going to go to summer school, you are going to do something like that.

I won't even go to the department questions, but there was an implied bargain. You put your kid in the school, and you get a year's growth for a year's schooling, that they would be at grade level. That was sort of the idea.

That is where you were moving, and that is—I think when we talk about proficiency, we all understood that we were talking about grade level.

And, Mr. Klein, you talked about, you know, the mass of investments you are making in data, and one of the things as we kind of look around the country—districts that have decided that they are going to—and states that decide they are going to embrace the data seem—and, Kati, you referenced this in your discussion—and try to figure out accountability and use this data to get a road map seem to be doing somewhat better.

But you have to—I think in this version of trying to close the gap, you have got to embrace the data. You have got to know something about your students. You have to know on a real-time basis what is happening in that classroom.

And we didn't invent high-stakes testing. We didn't do any of that. We took the stakes as we found them. In fact, the president and I, one of the few times we have ever been in unison, talked about diagnostic data. We really wanted real-time interventions, hopefully small interventions that could make a large difference for students.

But as we now start to look at the data, another thing is happening. Some of the urban myths and legends are falling apart: But for those English learners, we would have made AYP. The data from the Aspen Institute starts to suggest that is not the case.

If we had only had a growth model, we would have made AYP. Your data suggested in some cases that is not the case.

And I think what we need to understand here is that in achieving the growth and the proficiency that we want, there is a lot of work that needs to be done. It is not just changing the standard.

And I think you sort of say that, Kati, in your testimony.

You know, Dr. Sanders, you are kind of a legend, you know, to me, in the sense that how you took this problem apart of value-added.

But it starts to suggest that if we really make the investment in our teacher corps, if we really, you know, understand the need for that core investment, we can, in fact, get these years of growth in succession and not have the student fall back.

So the data becomes—it is troublesome, because it describes the magnitude of what we have to do and the resources that are going to have to be necessary. Some states don't have a clue what is

going on inside that classroom. Therefore, they can't make changes that help those students.

And I just—I don't know if there is a comment there for you to make, but I am concerned that we think if we just tinker with this, all will be right, because I have gone into I don't know how many school rooms in how many schools all across this nation, and I have always been told but for those English learners we could have—just two students missed the mark, we were going to be a great school.

Now, I don't know if AYP would have told me that was a great school or not, because we understand that it is not a fair measurement in some instances. But that is not the problem, I don't think.

It is what we have—we have to hold that as a standard, but getting to those high standards, getting to those aligned curriculums, getting to tests that are useful and impart information on a timely basis is also a big part of the problem, and I don't—you know, goes to some question of resources.

That is my comment here, because—if you want to comment, I would certainly appreciate it. If you can't decipher it, send me a note 10 days from now. But I just want to—I want us to understand the magnitude of the problem we are engaging here.

I mean, there has been some alignment, and I think we have got a lot of people headed in the right direction over the last 5 years, but there is a big unfinished part of this painting here.

Mr. KLEIN. Mr. Miller, I would like to comment. I will also send you a letter, but I would like to comment.

I think what you say is absolutely true, and I don't think anybody on the panel would disagree, that if you—you can have a perfect accountability system, but if you don't have the proper investments in terms of your human resources, your talent and so forth, you are not going to get the job done.

However, it seems to me accountability, which is a core thing, and trying to change the culture of a school system in which you are saying to your folks, which I am saying all the time, we are responsible for the educate of our kids—the days of excuses are over—it is the kids, it is poverty, it is the fact that they are immigrants. I don't want to hear that.

What I want to hear is how we are going to educate each and every one of our kids. And accountability is critical to that equation. And so what I am trying to say to you today is the message that I try to send to my school system is this is our collective responsibility in the city of New York.

For far too long, far too many of our kids have not gotten the education that they need to succeed. But I need to be able to convince those people that the measurements we use are really very powerful and fair.

And I agree with you. The fact that there is a growth model is going to lead to schools that don't pass the average yearly progress. There is no question about it.

And I think Bill Sanders' point is a very important one. Some of those schools are going to be schools that people now call good schools, because they are not moving their kids. And what you want to see is really almost a kind of kinetic motion in the system of all the kids moving, not a strategic motion.



I walked into a school not far from Major Owens' district and the principal said—I said you had such great results, you went up 20 points last year, how did you do it.

You know what he did? He took out a little chart, and he said here are all my kids. I looked at all the ones that were closest to level three and just above level three.

The ones above level three I wanted to make sure they don't fall below level three, so I focused on them. The ones below level three, I boosted them up level three, and we raised it then by 20 points. I said what happened to the other kids. He said they probably did OK.

And I think it is very important that we don't breed cynicism about accountability, and that is why I think what Dr. Sanders has done has really enabled us to move it to a different level.

I agree with Kati. In the end, the solution is not to simply grow to no end. It is to grow to proficiency, but I would say even beyond proficiency. Proficiency is a minimalist standard.

Our nation isn't going to succeed if our kids are not proficient—many of them—at an entirely higher level. So I think what you say is right, but I wouldn't discount the power of what we measure in terms of the behaviors in the school system like mine.

Mr. MILLER. I was just going to say I don't want to be unfair to my colleagues who are waiting here for questions, so I will take my answers on the air later, because I am afraid I am going to run over time, and you had better recognize that.

But I am sorry, Reg. We will talk about this. I don't know what to do. I took too much time with the question, is the problem.

Mrs. BIGGERT [presiding]. Thank you.

The gentleman from Delaware, Mr. Castle, is recognized.

Mr. CASTLE. Thank you very much.

I think this is an extremely important hearing, which I have been pushing for, and it is an extremely important but very difficult subject. I agree with chairman's suggestion that we have round table discussions at some point.

I don't know if a hearing, 5 minutes of testimony and a few questions, lends itself to what we need. Plus, this happens to be an extraordinarily busy morning, which is unfortunate, too.

You know, this is an aside from everything, but in dealing with education over many years now, I just have learned that you need sort of a systemic component—and Dr. Shaul is retiring, and I say this to her now, but you need a systemic component to all this.

I see so many charismatic type programs and individuals who do things in education, but it doesn't translate to other people being able to do it.

I think any time we have a report, any time we have a suggestion for something, you need to have some sort of a spelling out of how it could be done systemically and not just by those individuals who sort of embrace it, or it is what they do, or how they get their foundations of whatever the heck it may be. Some of these things just fall when you get into that.

I also worry about what Ms. Haycock said, that we worry too much about accountability definition and not improvement. I am just seeing way too much of that. I am from Delaware, and I have seen just incredible improvement in these scores.

And I have been in those schools, and I have seen what they are doing, and they are really breaking it down and really analyzing it, and that is systemic. That is something I think would translate to other schools.

But I have been in other schools where everybody is throwing their hands up and saying oh, we can't do this, we need something else, or whatever it may be, No Child Left Behind is no good, and that is just not teachers. That is administrators, even some parents in some cases, even state officials in some cases, as we have seen with lawsuits or whatever.

So that concerns me a lot, too. We need to really focus on getting this job done, and I think it can be done.

I also worry about the different standards and assessments, and I realize that all 50 states have gone through the Department of Education, but I still think there is a tremendous variance between standards and assessments.

And I am not about to suggest national standards and assessments, but it goes through my mind every now and then. It would sure straighten out some of those problems that exist out there. You know, maybe it is worthy of discussion at some point.

But I think this is important. I think this is the most important aspect of No Child Left Behind, what we are talking about today, in terms of what may change in the next reiteration of this particular legislation.

And I am not suggesting I understand it, and I do appreciate the study, which is just being issued now, and which I haven't had a chance to really review myself, so I have a long ways to go, too.

But my question, if anyone wants to take a stab at it before the red light goes on, is what are we talking about here in terms of the—is this an either/or circumstance, or is it a blended circumstance?

I think, Chancellor Klein, you just made a statement—I think I got it correct—that the growth model will lead to schools that don't make AYP. Well, that would mean to me that it is not either/or. That would lead me to believe that it is some sort of a blended, you know, situation.

And perhaps it should be. Why shouldn't a school that is doing very well also be able to show growth as well as the schools doing poorly, which, by showing growth, can get to AYP?

I am not sure what the answer to that is, but I am interested in any quick comments you might have about the—you know, whether we are dealing with an either/or or blend situation with respect to growth models or the pure testing.

Ms. HAYCOCK. Well, I can tell you, Mr. Castle, that the two states that got approval for a growth model are, in fact, blended systems. About each school there are essentially three questions asked.

First, do they make AYP under the straight status model. If the answer to that is yes, then they make AYP. If the answer is no, though, then the question is did you make it under the safe harbor or sort of improvement model. If the answer to that is yes, they make AYP. If the answer to that is no, then the question is do they make it under a growth model.

So in both cases it is essentially a blended system. You essentially have several options in reauthorization. You could ask for blended systems, you could allow states to go with a growth only system, or any combination thereof.

But the two experiments at least that you have under way now are blended models.

Mr. CASTLE. Dr. Sanders?

Mr. SANDERS. I would just make one additional comment on that. Based upon all of the analysis that we have done, I would certainly recommend a blended system.

I would allow, just as Kati has pointed out, that—schools to apply the existing AYP rules. What I would do is substitute the projection growth model, if you would, component for the safe harbor part that is present.

In other words, instead of going the way it is right now, even for the two states that were approved, this was essentially a pilot to augment what existed, so you remember what Chancellor Klein mentioned and what I attempted to mention.

One of the things that concerns me the most is particularly schools serving a disproportionate number of poor and minority kids. That is when those early above-average kids too often are allowed to slide.

That is, to me, one of the biggest negatives associated with the present system. And that has not been that—it is not recognized under the existing system. And that is the sliding of above-average kids.

So if you substituted a growth component for the existing safe harbor, that would be my preference.

Mr. CASTLE. But just in closing, I hope when it comes time to write all this that you all will be around to help us with it, because it sounds to me like it is going to be complicated.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. The gentleman yields back.

The gentlelady from California, Ms. Woolsey, is recognized.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

First of all, I agree with Chancellor Klein. No Child Left Behind is extremely valuable and important to us, but it does need to be improved.

What I say is it needs to be fixed, and it can be fixed without giving up accountability, improving teaching and learning, and without giving up on high-quality schools and their teachers.

So I am not going to say any more than that. I am going to ask two questions. I have done quite a bit of research and discussion with my local educators and with national education groups over the last year, and two major questions that continue to come up fit right in with what we are talking about today.

One, on growth. The question of can we educate our most challenged students—English learners, those that are economically disadvantaged—within a growth model that, over time, will not leave them behind.

And the second one is—my second question is accountability based solely on test scores is not very popular in my area. What would you recommend? What would you recommend that would include teaching the whole child?

Can we provide growth models that include, yes, math and reading, of course, but also P.E., history, art, and music, and all of the other things that kids need to be whole people when they are finished with school?

So I am going to leave it there and answer as you wish. Let's start with Dr. Sanders. He looks like he is ready.

Mr. SANDERS. I am sorry, I couldn't hear the last point.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Pardon?

Mr. SANDERS. I am sorry, I missed your last comment. I am sorry.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Well, the last comment was a growth model that includes educating the whole child, meaning in addition to math and reading.

Mr. SANDERS. Well, first of all, let me refer to some comments that Dr. Weaver made earlier. To me, one of the really huge advantages of states creating the longitudinal data structure—the accountability part is important, but what is even more important is the diagnostic information that is now available.

And when you begin to start looking at projections for every single kid as an individual to various standards in the future—if we have got a child that is very low achieving, the first standard is to get that kid—the first objective is to get that kid on a trajectory to meet the proficiency standards 1 year or 2 years in the future.

But once we have got a kid like that, then let's talk about getting that kid on a trajectory to meet high school graduation requirements. Once we have got kids on that trajectory, let's talk about getting those kids on trajectories to have more opportunities for more college majors.

So in other words, once you begin to create the longitudinal data structure, you have got the opportunity to begin to start focusing and planning for the needs for a diversity of students.

Now, we worked very closely with the Tennessee Department of Education in preparing their proposal that was—and we are very proud of that, that was approved to be one of the two states.

Now, back to your thing of all children and all subgroups, in that proposal, all subgroups with regard to their projections have got to meet it or they don't get credit from this alternative approach—ESL kids, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

Now, I will make one comment on ESL kids. We have had the opportunity to look at a lot of data, a lot of years.

If you are a principal or a classroom teacher, looking at it from a value-added or growth project, you often want those kids in your classroom because as they accumulate more language skills, often their gain rates is higher, not lower. So consequently, the data strongly suggest that that is not a problem.

Now, for kids that are significantly learning-impaired, what we believe and was included in that proposal—those students take an alternative assessment. You include that data in the overall computations, but you do that relative to the appropriate assessment for their needs.

So consequently that has got to be incorporated in total. But it can all be done within the overriding spirit of No Child Left Behind.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Thank you.

Dr. Weaver?

Mr. WEAVER. I cannot tell you how pleased I am to be a part of this discussion. I cannot tell you how pleased I am.

But you know what I want to do? I want to speak to you as a parent, and many parents with whom I have spoken with. And I also want to speak to you as a teacher representing many with whom I have spoken with.

And I also want to speak to you as an African-American, many of whom I speak with consistently and whose children are not receiving what they consider to be the kind of education that they want.

And when I talk with them and I tell them that I was a part of this panel, and we were talking about growth models, you know what they are going to say? They are going to look at me—what is that? I could care less, because how is that going to impact what happens to my kid.

I want my kid to be able to have the opportunity to have science and math and technology. I want my kid to be able to have a qualified and certified teacher. I want my kid to be able to go to a school that is safe and orderly.

I want my kid to be able to have counselors. I want my kid to be able to have smaller class sizes, because I know that that is what it is going to take for my kid to be successful.

And the growth model—I think it can lead to that, but the parents don't understand that. And when we go out and talk about well, we think that we need to have growth model added to No Child Left Behind, we understand that, but how do we get the parents to understand that?

How do we get the average teacher, administrator and other educator to understand that? So I am saying a lot of times we talk to ourselves in a code that the parents don't understand, the public doesn't understand, and as a result it is difficult to get their support.

I go to these parents and I talk about—and teachers—well, I believe that no one test should be used to determine the future of a child. I believe that there needs to be multiple assessments, such as college entrance, such as retention—graduation rates, such as portfolios.

Those are the kinds of things that I do believe that we can begin to utilize in addition to having the test. A test should be a unit to measure, not the unit.

And also, I believe that we need to look at how people view outputs and inputs. When we think about outputs, we are talking about a test score as if the test score is the only unit to determine whether or not a kid is successful.

And we get focused on the output which is the test score, and we forget about the input, input such as class size, qualified and certified teachers, safe and orderly environment, parental involvement, because I believe that the input helps to determine the output.

And so again, I am speaking for those individuals who are not here to speak for themselves.

Mrs. BIGGERT. The gentlelady's time has expired.

You might have noticed that there is rather a dearth of committee members over on this side of the aisle, and I know that they would really like to be here, but there was an important meeting called. I just wanted the witnesses to know that.

I will recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Dr. Shaul, in your GAO report you mention that 26 states were using growth models and another 22 states were either considering using them or in the process of implementing them, even though they are not under the—they are not part of the pilot but just on their own.

Do you believe that all of these states are in a position to implement the growth models that comply with the goals of No Child Left Behind and the guidelines set by the Department of Education in their pilot program?

Ms. SHAUL. Not all the states are in a position to be able to implement the department's growth model pilot, which set out some very high standards, seven core principles that models needed to meet, that used individual student data.

Of the states that we looked at, seven of the states had models that were based on individual student data. The rest were using school-level data. So they would not have been eligible.

As you know, 20 states chose to apply. Only eight states were peer-reviewed as being close enough to actually having systems in place that would meet the department's goals.

Mrs. BIGGERT. When you look at these growth models and we are looking at the proficiency and having to reach 100 percent by 2013—and in the growth models, if they don't go up, you know, at a—in other words, a line that goes up instead of going like this at the end, then it is going to have to go like this.

Do you think that this will work?

Ms. SHAUL. I think that states can design growth models that set a trajectory that will allow all students to be proficient by 2014. But for some students, those trajectories will be pretty high if they are starting at lower levels.

But I think it is possible. But then, of course, setting the accountability systems—it goes back to points other panelists were making. Then you would have to have tailored instruction, the other things in place that will allow those students to reach those high standards.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Thank you.

And I will yield back.

Mr. Van Hollen from Maryland is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman.

And let me thank all of you for your testimony. As others have said, I think this is a very valuable hearing for all of us, and I think we are approaching this in a bipartisan spirit at this point as to what is best for the kids.

And I think that all of you have made the case that the current system of AYP does create some of these perverse incentives in the program. You talked about the kids between—you know, on the bubble between 2.9 and 3.1, and a lot of emphasis and focus is put on them to the exclusion of people who are way below and probably

won't make it up to that standard, or people who are above that standard.

Now, clearly, I think that we need to eliminate those kind of perverse incentives. And I think that we need to come up with something different. In doing that, we need to make sure we don't replace it with another standard that creates different perverse incentives.

And Mr. Castle said he hopes you are all here while we do that. I do, too. But I also hope that that doesn't mean we come up with a Rube Goldberg-type machine with, you know, three different things that no one can understand and does also substitute a system for this one and creates other perverse incentives.

And that is why the quality—and the quality of the data and the ability of these school systems to assemble the data necessary for the growth model is something that concerns me greatly.

As you just said, Dr. Shaul, I mean, you looked at about 25 states or whatever the number is that are currently using it somewhat—most for their own purposes, and whether they are in a position to even begin to implement a growth model.

And it seems to me that it is clear that we are not there yet. And if we really want to move them there, we are going to have to put some resources and some Federal Government money and some guidelines and standards for how we move in this direction. And let me just ask for the starting point.

And, Chancellor Klein, you mentioned the difference between spotlight and hammer. And whatever system we come up with in terms of what the standard is for measuring AYP, it seems to me collecting some of this data is important for the purposes of spotlight anyway.

Let's put aside the consequences, which can create these perverse—would you all agree that it makes sense to put all these school systems in a position where, whether or not we go to a full growth model, that we have the data necessary to determine whether progress is being made?

Would you all agree that we should at the very least do that?

Mr. KLEIN. Absolutely. And it is not just the school system. It is the people who are teaching our children who need the information, because if you get the test score at the end of the year, almost invariably that student is in another class at another time.

And what happens is you don't have the information to create the kind of positive feedback loop. Those schools that are using effective assessment strategies are able to intervene much more quickly on the ground at the time, and that is one of the key things.

And I admit this is a huge technological and data challenge, but if you don't address this challenge, it is like that old Thorndike experiment at Yale. You can throw darts at a target forever. If you are blindfolded, you are not going to get any better at it.

Now, we need the information to help the people who are teaching our kids do the work that they need to do to make the adjustments, because one thing that worries me enormously about assessing systems is you can always have different assessing systems, but in my school system when I got there, thousands and thousands of kids were in high school, unable to read.

Now, let me tell you something. That is because the system was unprepared to be serious about what it is to educate a kid. And we just passed them along to inevitable failure.

So to me, strong benchmarks along the way are one aspect—and then rich data to the people teaching our kids, so that they can actually do the transformative work with the kids.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Right. At some point—and time is running out, and I have another question—but it seems to me we need to get some kind of idea about what resources would be required to bring these school systems up to a point where they can have the—I mean, because bad data is not—bad results.

And perverse incentives to gather certain kinds of data is also a problem.

Let me just as you, Dr. Sanders—what I am trying to—and I commend you for what you have done in Tennessee. As I understand the system, under the waiver that you have got, you can achieve AYP in one of three different ways, is that right?

Mr. SANDERS. That is correct.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. And is that the kind of model you want to—I guess my concern at making that national is that it would allow a school system to game which of the three it is going to go for.

I am not saying that is happening in Tennessee, but just as a national model—in other words, we talked about the problems with the more static—the sort of status quo model, what we are using now.

But as I understand it, in Tennessee, you could hit AYP using that model. And if you miss AYP using that model, you can use the other model. But as you very aptly pointed out, there are schools that—your slide and glide, or whatever, rule.

I mean, there are schools that can make it under the current rules that would not be making it under the growth model. And if you allow sort of the school system to target one, two or three, you may get a situation where they go for the strategy to go for the one they are making now, but they would miss it under another.

And it seems to me you don't want that kind of gamesmanship going on.

Mr. SANDERS. Working with the Tennessee Department of Education, for the proposal to be considered for the pilots, we perceived the guidelines to be to talk about an augmentation of the existing process.

What I attempted to do in my previous remarks was basically say if I were doing this from scratch, I would leave the existing AYP in place but I would change the safe harbor part to essentially be the growth projection model.

And then I want to very briefly say I didn't—it is in my written statements but not here. I want the committee to recognize that all of these growth models are not the same and do not yield the same rigor and the same properties.

And so consequently some of these more simplistic approaches to measures of growth I think should be seriously frowned on, like, for example, merely subtracting last year's score from this year's score, et cetera, because those things are extremely unstable.

And everybody in the room would agree that in schools serving high concentrations of low-scoring kids, you have got more missing



scores. And so any of the—I don't want to spin off on a whole bunch of quantitative mumbo-jumbo here, but any of these growth models—and this is where I really appreciate what the peer team—you folks need to look very carefully at what the peer reviewers said about that.

So if a state is proposing this, there should be some minimal quantitative standards placed. But your specific question, sir—I would blend it. I would leave exactly what you have got. Then if they want to go under safe harbor, I would definitely go to that.

And then finally, the other comment—I would not hold all states to the same capacity as the minimum state. In other words, states that have invested and were further down the road with regard to capacity to do this, you should build in the legislation flexibility where those states could take advantage of it.

In other words, don't wait till all states have this capacity. Allow the state—and actually create an incentive for the states, because as Dr. Weaver says, the big—actually, the byproducts could be greater than the product.

The byproducts is this wealth of diagnostic information that is going to flow to principals and teachers and so forth relative to the progress and the trajectories of all these kids as individuals.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Thank you.

Mrs. BIGGERT. The gentleman's time has expired.

The gentlewoman from California, Ms. Davis, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

And thank you to all of you for being here. I wanted to raise an issue that we haven't talked about this morning that I raised when we were discussing the end sizes a while back and how we structure or how we count children in specific subgroups.

And that is the whole idea of AYP and whether, in fact, we have a number of students who aren't counted because they enter the school after the yearly progress counts have been designated. And I don't know across the country the extent of that problem.

And we know that it is not that kids who move around from school to school aren't counted, but when it comes to AYP, in fact, they are not necessarily included in that data. So how do we get at that issue in the growth models? And how can we begin to think about that?

You all have talked about the importance of, you know, intervening on the ground. It worries me that we have a number of students who, in fact, for a number of reasons do move around. Some school districts have made great accommodations so kids can move in and out within clusters fairly easily. But the reality is I think we are missing these kids.

Dr. Sanders, you are smiling. Could you comment on that? And how do we use the growth models to support that so that we do have the data, we do understand what impact that has on them?

Mr. SANDERS. Let me attempt to answer your question, first of all, from a statistical theory methodological point of view. If I had the data to know what percentage of time this child was in that school, then with this longitudinal record you would certainly have a way to apportion a part of that kid's time according to the

amount of time that the kid was in this school compared to another school, et cetera.

We probably have constructed more longitudinal data structures to date than anybody. We presently have the data from at least one district from over 20 states. Presently, I have yet to see any data system that would have that kind of information that would enable one to go so practically, even though the theory is there.

The analytical capacity is there. The data structures are not there to know that little Suzie was in School A for 38 days and in School B for 61 days, et cetera, et cetera.

That is a concern. But it is something that I think, as data structures mature over time—there are kids falling through the cracks. There I don't think is any question about that, particularly kids that move around.

Now, in our value-added modeling efforts, where we are doing the summative measures—this is in my written remarks—you will see this is one of the very points that I am making.

Any of these structures have got to be sophisticated—any of these accountability systems have got to be sophisticated enough to utilize the data for all kids, not just for the kids that are not moving around.

So I am attempting to answer your question from a theoretical conceptual point of view, and then move to the practical reality under No Child Left Behind with regard to that.

Right now, I have yet to see any of the data structures that will enable you to have those sorts of things that would enable you to do that. The percentage of the kids that are falling through the cracks I think perhaps is lower than some people would guess it to be, because we can do things like—we know how many kids in a large urban district took the test somewhere.

Then we know how many kids that we had previous scores on somewhere. And then we can—in fact, that was one of the questions the peer review team had. How does those ratios of kids with prior data compare across their socioeconomic groups?

There is a difference. Minority kids, ESL kids, will have a lower ratio, but it is not as big as some would have guessed it to be. I think Congressman Miller's comment earlier—sometimes the things that we have heard merely being horror stories, when you really go in and look at the data, are not as big as sometimes people think it is.

Ms. HAYCOCK. Ms. Davis, if I could just say so, I hope you will stick with this issue. While it may not be our topic here today, it is a very important question that you are raising.

As you know, in an effort to be sort of fair to schools, your decision last go 'round was to take kids who were not in the school for a full academic year out of the equation, put them into the district, so somebody is responsible, but as you know, if it is not really the school, then that doesn't work very well.

And yes, in fact, that may feel fairer to schools, but we have got to really ask the question, given the amount of mobility there is in many communities, like certainly yours, whether it is fair to kids.

And we have got a number of places, like Kentucky, that actually had always had all kids in the accountability system and were essentially forced to take them out in order to become compliant with

NCLB. And there is a lot of dissatisfaction in Kentucky with that right now.

So coming back to that issue in reauthorization and ask the question what is fair to both schools and kids, and how do we really make sure that the mobile kids get the attention they need to advance, because there is too many mobile kids to shut out to the side.

Mrs. BIGGERT. The gentlelady's time has—

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you. My time is up.

Mrs. BIGGERT [continuing]. Expired.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Can I get Dr. Weaver to make a very brief comment? Would that acceptable?

Mrs. BIGGERT. Well, no.

Mrs. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. No? OK.

Mrs. BIGGERT. I think that we have got so many members waiting. We will have votes at noon, so we would like to try and finish by then and make sure everybody can have an opportunity. Otherwise we could come back.

But the gentleman from New York, Mr. Owens, is recognized.

Mr. OWENS. I want to begin by thanking Mr. Klein for his kind remarks.

And I also want to salute my friend Reggie Weaver. He heads a collective bargaining unit that doesn't represent my city, but I regret that very much. He is very outspoken on the national macro issues in education as well as the micro issues that concern his members, and I salute him for that.

This panel has been very informative, starting with Director Shaul. I have got a good idea how to easily clearly explain this to parents from your presentation.

I also very much appreciate the remarks of Dr. Sanders. Standard school efforts—I mean sustained school efforts can trump socioeconomic influences. I think you said something like that.

I think that links with something that Reggie Weaver said, qualified, diverse and stable staff are very important as part of this process of achieving the goals that we have set.

You have been very disciplined, all of you, in keeping the discussion within the context of what I call a grand accountability hypocrisy that No Child Left Behind forces us all to operate within, or at least a grand incomplete accountability system, because it holds the teachers and the children accountable, but it does not hold the system—the decisionmakers who promulgate the budgets are not held accountable.

And just a quick piece of history. Ronald Reagan and the Governors started the whole business of let's have national standards. Under Bush we codified it—national standards for curriculum, national standards—voluntary, by the way—national standards for curriculum, national standards for testing.

This committee, Democrats on this committee, fought very hard to add another set of national standards, national standards for opportunities to learn under leadership of now Senator Jack Reed and the late Patsy Meek—they were the great troublemakers. I just held their coats.

We went up against the Clinton administration and Secretary Riley because the Governors, both Democratic and Republican,

didn't want national standards for accountability because national standards—national standards for opportunity to learn.

National standards for opportunity to learn said you know, as you—before you measure how well the kids and the teachers are doing in their schools, measure what you are doing to provide them with the resources that they need.

Are you doing the things that will allow us to have qualified teachers, you know, libraries that are sufficient, school laboratories, et cetera?

I don't think you have very many physics teachers in your physics classes in high school. Last time I looked there were few actual physics teachers who majored in physics teaching physics in high school.

In the junior high schools, we don't even have laboratories in most of our junior high school science departments in New York.

I want to say that we cannot continue to run away from opportunity to learn standards as being a part of the accountability model. We have to have—address this issue, not just focus on one part of it. That is qualified teachers.

We do deal with that sort of as a footnote in No Child Left Behind. There is money in there that got reduced first when they started making cuts. But the teachers are bitter. The administrators are bitter. I am sure New York City is not the only place where they are bitter, because they think they are being forced into a system where they are not provided with appropriate resources.

They need the books. They need the libraries. They need modern technology. So we need to zero in on, let's just say, qualified, diverse and stable staff.

How can we accomplish that within the context of the present system, where not enough money is going to be made available, say, for New York City, which operates in competition with the surrounding suburbs and the rest of the nation?

We train qualified teachers and they go off to higher salaries and higher opportunities.

I want to focus on you, Mr. Chancellor, and say is there one—is there a possible way that we can combat this loss of qualified, diverse and stable staff? Because I don't think much is going to happen in improving these models.

You know, I think Secretary Spellings pointed out that New York City is one of the places where we have still a great problem of certified teachers—still a problem. And the least certified teachers, non-certified teachers, and the substitutes are concentrated in low-income communities.

Community leaders told you that 40 years ago. Nothing has changed. Or maybe something has changed. I hope it has. But basically, that is a truth that you have to leave with. Without the qualified teachers, we are not going to make the progress. Growth model, whatever you say—it is not going to happen.

So, Chancellor, do you have any plans—I know that your administration talks about a conglomerate system willing to experiment, diversify. In order to hold teachers, I would take any experiment—I won't take but one experiment off the table. We don't want vouchers.

But charter schools—

Mrs. BIGGERT. I am sorry.

Mr. OWENS [continuing]. Non-profit schools—I don't talk fast enough.

Mrs. BIGGERT. No, you didn't. I am sorry. Your time has expired.

Mr. OWENS. I will talk to you later about combining some kind of model to hold the teachers—

Mrs. BIGGERT. The gentleman from Texas is recognized.

Mr. OWENS [continuing]. Have a stake—have them have a stake in what happens in the community.

Mrs. BIGGERT. The gentleman from Texas is recognized, Mr. Hinojosa.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to say that it is—this is one of the best panels I have ever seen come before Congress to address one of the concerns that I have in education.

And seeing the audience, the size of the audience, the makeup of the audience, pleases me very much, because it shows me that there are people out there wanting as much as I do to hear from experts like you on how we should address a problem that was uncovered yesterday by the Government Accountability Office.

And I want to thank Marlene Shaul for you and your staff responding to our letter asking to give us the accountability of how No Child Left Behind was affecting our minority students.

And I say that I have lots of concerns about education for the last three or four decades that I have been involved as a policy-maker. But I want to say that that top concern is the persistently low high school graduation rate for minority students.

And I like all the stories that each one of the panelists have given.

And, Reg, you certainly did captivate those of us here as congressmen and congresswomen when you told the story about Cesar, because that reminded me of another young man who came from a math and science academy where more than 40 percent of the makeup of that student population are on the free lunch program. Eighty percent are Hispanic.

And we have a young man who graduated from that school and went on to graduate from the school of engineering at the University of Texas-Pan American at Edinburg at the age of 18. Unheard of.

But the point is there are many limited English proficient students of low-income families who have risen and been able to function in our system.

But what I hear from all of you and this gentleman, Mr. Sanders, as a statistician, is that we seem to have testing that is like a square peg being forced through a round hole, and it doesn't fit.

And those tests obviously do not measure the progress that the children have made. And there are many schools throughout the country like each one of you has pointed out that are showing that something is working with many of the minority students.

And it just seems like we in Congress don't have the political will to really invest the amount of money that it takes to be able to reach such large populations and to be able to bring the parental involvement that is one of the secrets of those schools that you all mentioned.

Every single one of those schools, like mine in south Texas—there is parental involvement at a much higher level than in most of the other schools. So how do you do that? How do you get the certified teachers and all of that?

So, Reggie, I want to start with you. Where does real accountability for high school graduation rates fit into the growth model of accountability?

Mr. WEAVER. Well, I think the accountability fits, again, when you give the people the opportunity to participate in helping to shape the circumstances that impact their work environment.

As it relates to the point that you made about dropouts, it is absolutely critical that we have some kind of legislation or something that speaks to high school dropouts, that speaks to literacy coaches, that enable us to be able to have a better understanding with what these young people need in order to be successful.

If, in fact, you really want to have the teachers to remain in the profession and to come into the profession, then I believe that you need to make sure that they have the respect that they deserve, that they have the opportunity to participate in the decisionmaking process, that you pay them, that they are involved in an atmosphere that is conducive to good teaching and learning. The schools have to be safe.

And so these are the kinds of things that I do know will attract and keep the kind of people that we want in our profession to be able to work with these young people.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Kati, I am sure that being here in Washington, D.C., you must have participated and heard about the National Association of Governors meeting here in Washington on one issue, and that was the high school dropout rate, addressing it, and they brought in Margaret Spellings and all the experts we could bring, and we addressed it.

So the question to you is why do you think that Congress has not been able to address the need for the resources that are needed after seeing that 50 Governors came, all concerned about this problem, and yet a year has gone by and—

Mrs. BIGGERT. The gentleman's time from Texas has expired.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mrs. BIGGERT. The gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Kildee, is recognized.

Mr. KILDEE. Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

First, I apologize for being tardy for the meeting. I was down at the White House for the signing of the Voting Rights Act, another very important milestone in our country's history.

I have seen most of you, know most of you.

Reg, I see you all over the country, including my home town of Flint. Good to see you again.

You know, the chairman made a comment that it would be great to have you in a better forum, a better setting with us, because we really—as has been mentioned, you are the most knowledgeable, helpful panelists that we have had.

And it would be kind of nice if we had you as adjunct members of this committee as we work our way through the reauthorization, because I think you would be very, very helpful.

Let me ask you this question. Under some growth model proposals, a school could have declining scores in one group, say economically disadvantaged group, and still make AYP. In our current system of disaggregated data, tell us this.

How can we implement growth models and assure that the additional resources triggered by our current AYP system are still made available to that subgroup that is struggling? And if I may add another question to that, how would a blended system take care of the needs of that subgroup?

Dr. Sanders?

Mr. SANDERS. When you—work with the Tennessee Department of Education in the proposal is that first of all, you start looking at all of the students as individuals. You don't pay any attention to subgroups first.

You start looking at all the kids as individuals. Then after you have done that—of whether or not all these individuals are on trajectories or not, then you aggregate it into all of the existing subgroups required under No Child Left Behind.

And for a school, then, to get credit for having passed AYP with this projection approach, all subgroups have got to meet it. So consequently, there will be no reason why that if a school is not hitting the trajectory for its ESL kids or its free and reduced-price lunch children, et cetera—if that subgroup doesn't meet it, they don't pass AYP with regard to the projection approach.

Ms. HAYCOCK. Let me, if I could, add one more point to that. And I very much agree with Bill's response. Under the current system, schools essentially make AYP or they don't. And you don't really have really good information on the sort of gradations of problem below that.

If you add a growth component to that, you can distinguish between two schools where—that didn't meet the status bar but one of them just barely didn't meet it, and the kids are on a trajectory that is quite clear within the next couple of years they are going to be proficient.

That school doesn't need nearly the extra intervention and resources that the school that is below that but not on a trajectory needs, and what the addition of the growth information does is allow you to make essentially more nuanced choices, decisions both about schools and how to categorize them, but also about what kinds of interventions are necessary.

Mr. KILDEE. Back again to the blended system, how would a blended system take care of the needs of those subgroups that may have special needs?

Ms. HAYCOCK. Bill is exactly right. In the blended system, the test is still both an overall test and a test for each subgroup, so you must make either the status, the safe harbor or the growth for every single subgroup.

So there is still very clear subgroup accountability. That doesn't change at all.

Mr. KILDEE. Well, thank you very much. This is a very helpful group. I know you will be helpful as we begin the process of reauthorizing this bill. Thank you very much.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Thank you.

The gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Scott, is recognized.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you.

And I want to add my voice to the comments you have heard about this panel as being one of the most helpful we have had on a difficult subject.

We have heard about the perverse incentives that occur when you don't align the rewards with the behavior that you want.

And, Dr. Sanders, you mentioned focusing just on the bubble and ignoring everybody else. And that same perverse incentives works around dropouts. There is a perverse incentive not to reach after people who have dropped out.

It was my understanding that when the bill passed we put a provision in there that punished you for a high dropout rate. That was the intent of the provision. Do you know what has happened to that? Anybody?

Ms. HAYCOCK. I do.

Mr. SCOTT. OK. Thank you.

Ms. HAYCOCK. Yes. In the case of high school accountability, you actually included a requirement that there be a second measure beyond performance on the assessment and that that measure be 4-year high school completion rates.

However, by contrast to what you did on the achievement side, where you actually required the bar to be set at certain levels and to grow over time, you made no such requirement for the dropout level. You essentially left to states the definition of what is adequate progress in reducing dropouts.

And the truth of the matter is that most states decided that not falling backwards very far was good enough.

Mr. SCOTT. Well, that is an area that we have to, obviously, deal with to get that perverse incentive back in line.

There is another problem we have had with special ed students. If someone qualifies for special education, obviously they are going to have a harder time achieving, and we want to align good teaching with reality.

Unfortunately, if you do it too well, there is a perverse incentive to over-identify people as special ed. You have got some students that aren't doing so hot, you just call them special ed and they all of a sudden don't have to achieve.

How can we avoid the incentive to over-identify and give a reasonable measure of how to measure special ed students?

Ms. SHAUL. The flexibilities the department provided only allow a certain percentage of students who have disabilities to be counted or excluded from the calculations for AYP.

Mr. SCOTT. So if you over-identify, you still have to—only a certain percentage get excluded?

Ms. SHAUL. The students, for example—with the severely cognitively disabled students, up to 1 percent of those—those students—when they take those tests, they can be—1 percent of those students can be excluded.

But they can be included if they pass the test. One percent can be excluded. But if there are more students who do not pass the test, they are still included in the overall count.

So for that subgroup, they would not count as passing.

Mr. SCOTT. The growth model helps if you are having a—if you have a high school and the middle schools from which you receive



students are failing schools, you have a tougher job than if the students you receive were not failing.

And yet the incentive there is to try to talk the school board into redistricting, so you get some better middle schools. If you don't have a growth model, how do you deal with that? Because if you receive all failing students and get half of them to pass, that is better than somebody who just maintains the status quo.

Without a growth model—would the growth model help deal with that problem?

Mr. WEAVER. I don't know whether a growth model—I would think that it would, but I—you know, you mentioned special education, and then there was mention of the dropout.

I believe that what we need are programs that help these individual students to feel, No. 1, that they can be successful and that that leads to them staying in school. It leads to them believing that they can be successful and attain a college degree or a trade degree.

And as we talk about growth models, I believe that I want to inject in here something that I think is crucial, and that is pre-K, early childhood education, because if we get them earlier—the earlier we get them, the much better chance we have of—

Mr. SCOTT. Well, let me get to that again in a quick question. You mentioned input and output. Can you see how that works from—are we moving the achievement gap? If you have got a gap, don't you have to improve the input on the students for whom—who are victims of the gap?

Mr. WEAVER. Well, see, the input to me means things that are important to achieving the—closing the gap—qualified and certified teachers, class size, adequate and equitable funding, safe and orderly schools, parental involvement.

Those are the kinds of inputs that I believe are important to help the—

Mr. SCOTT. And if you have an achievement gap you would have to emphasize those inputs for that subgroup.

Mr. WEAVER. I believe you need to emphasize that regardless of what the population of students are. The question is will the key policymakers have the commitment to make it happen.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Does the gentleman yield back?

Mr. MILLER. Just on that point, it would seem to me that if the growth model is constructed correctly, and assuming a decent level of resources, that the growth model should in some ways equate expanded opportunities for those students who are not on that trajectory that you want.

I mean, you know, we—under the schools in need of improvement, theoretically additional resources would flow. In some cases, it has. In some cases, it hasn't.

But in theory, if you had that information, and the earlier you had that information and that trajectory, you should be able to make an intervention, so that information in itself will help those teachers, that school principal and that district understand the deployment of those resources.

I am assuming that you would get additional resources, but even with existing resources you may make a more efficient use of those

resources than you otherwise would when you didn't have that information.

Mr. KLEIN. Absolutely. But it is important to understand that—I think everyone said it, but I want to underscore it. It means that each kid has real value in the accountability system, and that there is no reason for every kid—special ed kid, and language proficient kid—there is no reason for every kid not to be moving forward in a steady, coherent way.

And the theory of a growth model is to say now, if you are not moving those kids forward, whatever the resource constraints—there is not a person who doesn't want to see more resources.

But whatever the constraints are, you are able to then both target the resources in terms of differentiated strategies and also to look, frankly, in terms of the professional development of your workforce, so that you can make sure—why are these kids who started in the same place in one class—they moved forward a full grade.

These kids who started in the same place in another class did not. What is that about? And you need to be able to address that day in and day out in the work we do, because—and that is what is wrong with NCLB right now.

I have got kids in so-called high-performance schools who are not moving forward. And nobody is going to bother them because they meet AYP and everyone sees them as high performing.

So if you want the kind of precision you are looking for, Mr. Miller, then I think you need a heavy dose of growth.

And I want to end this way. Everybody wants to see proficiency. But if you look at New York City public school system right now, we have vast numbers of kids, and we have had, for as far back as anybody can remember, vast numbers of kids who are not close to proficient.

And we have got to devise a system that gets them there over the time that they are in the school system. And we can pretend we have a national standard that says they are all going to get there on a certain date.

But the truth of the matter is if they don't get there incrementally, year by year, they are not getting there. And we can deal with that issue in a multitude of ways—changing the proficiency standard, all sorts of other goofy things.

Or we can get serious about the fact that the dimensions of the problem require each and every kid growing all of the time in the 12 years, not kids who are in the 12th grade in New York City who can't read. Those kids didn't grow, period, in the time they were in the school system.

Mrs. BIGGERT. And that would be the last word. Thank you.

I remind members that they have 14 days to submit questions for written answers from the witnesses.

I would like to thank the witnesses for their valuable time and testimony, and both the witnesses and members for their participation.

If there is no further business, the committee stands adjourned.  
[Whereupon, at 12:01 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]